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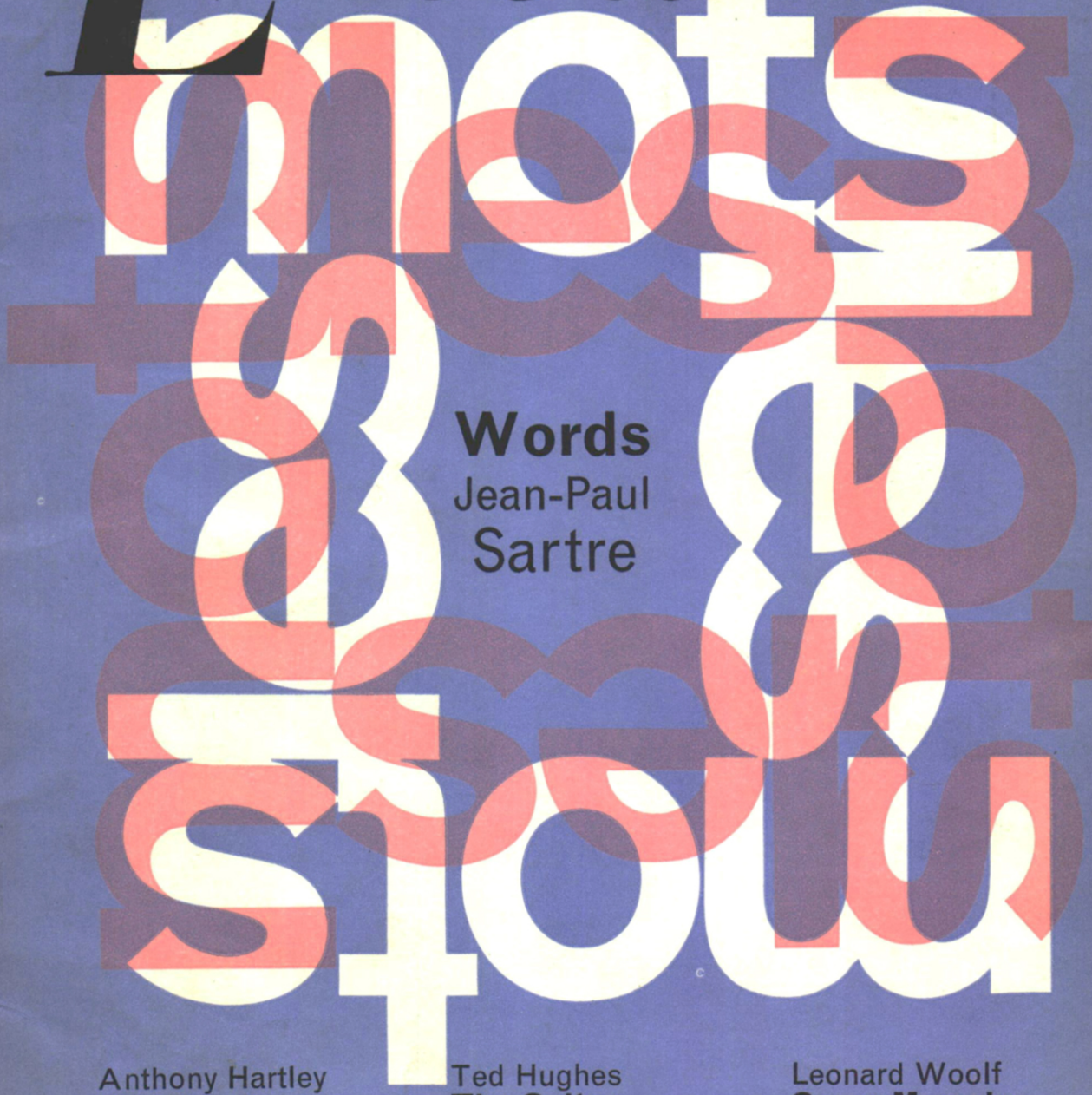

Words
Jean-Paul Sartre

Anthony Hartley
The Bomb

Louis Kronenberger
A Taste of Money

R. Prawer Jhabvala
Letter from Delhi

Ted Hughes
The Suitor

Philip Rieff
Jung's Confession

John Wain
C. S. Lewis

Leonard Woolf
Some Memoirs

edited by
Stephen Spender & Melvin J. Lasky

May 1964
monthly 4s 128

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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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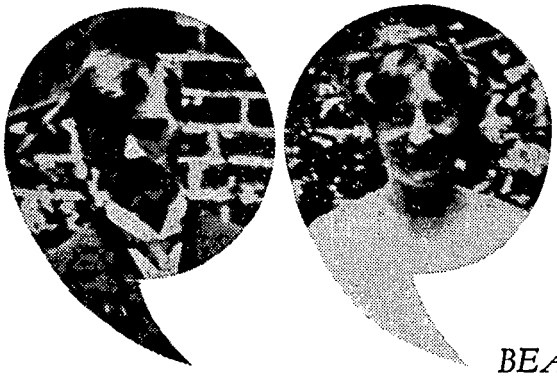

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Jean-Paul Sartre

Words

I BEGAN my life as I shall no doubt end it: among books. In my grandfather's study, they were everywhere; it was forbidden to dust them except once a year, before the October term. Even before I could read, I already hallowed these raised stones; upright or leaning, wedged together like bricks on the library shelves or nobly spaced like avenues of dolmens, I felt that our family fortune depended on them. They were all alike, and I was romping about in a tiny sanctuary, surrounded by squat, ancient monuments which had witnessed my birth, which would witness my death, and whose permanence guaranteed me a future as calm as my past. I used to touch them in secret to honour my hands with their dust but I did not have much idea what to do with them and each day I was present at ceremonies whose meaning escaped me: my grandfather—so clumsy, normally, that my grandmother buttoned his gloves for him—handled these cultural objects with the dexterity of an officiating priest. Hundreds of times I saw him get up absent-mindedly, walk round the table, cross the room in two strides, unhesitatingly pick out a volume, without allowing himself time for choice, flip through it as he went back to his armchair, with a combined movement of his thumb and right forefinger and, almost before he sat down, open it with a flick "at the right page," making it creak like a shoe. I sometimes used to go over to these boxes which opened like oysters and exposed the nakedness of their internal organs, pale, damp, slightly blistered pages, covered with small black veins, which drank ink and smelt of mildew.

In my grandmother's room, the books were lying down; she used to borrow them from a lending-library and I never saw more than two at a time. These trashy works reminded me of New Year sweetmeats because their shiny flexible covers seemed cut out of glazed paper. Bright, white, almost new, they served as an excuse for petty mysteries. Each Friday, my grandmother would get dressed to go out and say: "I'm going to take *them* back"; when she returned and had taken off her black hat and her veil, she would take *them* out of her muff and I would wonder, mystified: "Are they the same ones?" She used to "cover" them carefully and then, having chosen one, she would settle herself by the window, in her grandfather's chair, put on her spectacles, sigh with weary pleasure, and lower her eyelids with a delicately voluptuous smile which I have since discovered on the lips of the Mona Lisa; my mother would fall silent, inviting me to keep quiet, and I would think about mass, death, or sleep: I invested myself with holy silence. From time to time, Louise would give a chuckle; she would call to her daughter, point at a line, and the two women would exchange a conspiratorial look. Yet I did not care for these over-elegant works; they were intruders, and my grandfather did not hide the fact that they were part of an exclusively feminine, inferior cult. On Sundays, he would go, for want of anything better to do, into my grandmother's room and would plant himself in front of her without having anything to say: everyone would look at him, he would drum on the window-pane and then, void of ideas, he would turn back to Louise

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE'S *first autobiographical volume has just been published in Paris by Gallimard under the title* Les Mots *and will shortly be brought out here by Hamish Hamilton (Braziller in New York) in a translation by Tony White.*

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and snatch her book away from her. "Charles!" she would cry out angrily, "you'll lose my page!" Eyebrows raised, he would already be reading; suddenly his forefinger would rap the book: "Don't understand!" "But why do you want to understand?" my grandmother would say: "You read between the lines!" In the end, he would fling the book down on the table and go out with a shrug.

He was obviously right because he was in the profession. I knew that: he had shown me, on a shelf of the library, some strong, stiff-backed volumes, bound in brown cloth. "Your grandfather wrote those, my boy." What pride! I was the grandson of an artisan specialised in the manufacture of holy objects, as respectable as an organ-builder or an ecclesiastical tailor. I saw him at work: each year the *Deutsches Lesebuch* was re-edited. During the holidays, the entire family waited impatiently for the proofs: Charles could not stand inactivity so, to pass the time, he used to get cross. The postman would at last bring the large, flabby parcels and the string would be cut with scissors; my grandfather would undo the galley-proofs, spread them on the dining-room table, and slash them with red lines; he would swear between his teeth on the name of the Lord at every printing error but he would stop shouting when the maid wanted to lay the table. Everyone would be happy. Standing on a chair, I would gaze in ecstasies at the black lines, scored with blood. Charles Schweitzer told me that he had a mortal enemy, his publisher. But my grandfather had never been able to count: prodigal out of carelessness, generous out of show, he eventually succumbed, much later, to the octogenarian disease, greed, the legacy of impotence and the fear of death. At that time, it showed itself only in an odd suspiciousness: when he received a postal order for the sum of his royalties, he would raise his arms to the sky and cry out that they were slitting his throat or else he would go in to my grandmother and state gloomily: "My publisher's robbing me under my very eyes." Open-mouthed, I came to know man's exploitation of man. Yet, without this abomination, fortunately limited, the world would have been perfect: the bosses gave what they could and the workers got what they deserved. Why did those vampires of publishers have to spoil it all by sucking my poor grandfather's blood? My respect grew for this holy man whose devotion found no reward: from early on, I was prepared to see teaching as a priesthood and literature as a passion.

I was still unable to read but I was snobbish enough to insist on having my books. My grandfather went along to his scoundrel of a publisher and was given *Les Contes* by Maurice Bouchor, the poet, tales drawn from folklore and adapted to children's tastes by a man who, so they said, still had the eyes of a child. I wanted to begin my appropriation ceremonies on the spot. I took the two small volumes, sniffed at them, felt them, opened them casually "at the right page" and made them creak. It was no good: I did not feel that I owned them. I tried without greater success to treat them as dolls, cradle them, kiss them, and beat them. On the verge of tears, I finally laid them on my mother's lap. She looked up from her work: "What do you want me to read, darling? About the Fairies?" I asked incredulously: "Are there Fairies *in there*?" I knew the tale well: my mother often told it to me while she was removing my dirt, breaking off to massage me with eau de cologne or to pick up, from under the bath, the soap which had slipped from her hands, and I would listen with half an ear to an all-too-familiar story; all I wanted to see was Anne-Marie, the young girl of my mornings; all I wanted to hear was her voice, impaired by slavery; I loved her half-completed sentences, her forever slow-to-come words, and her abrupt confidences quickly defeated and put to rout, which disappeared with a pleasant tearing sound and then came together again, after a pause. The story was secondary: it was the link between her soliloquies. All the while she was talking, we were alone and private, far from man, gods, and priests, two does in the wood, with those other does, the fairies; I never could believe that a whole book could have been written to feature this episode in our profane life, which smelt of soap and eau de cologne.

Anne-Marie made me sit down in front of her, on my little chair; she leant over, lowered her eyelids and went to sleep. From this mask-like face issued a plaster voice. I grew bewildered: who was talking? about what? and to whom? My mother had disappeared: not a smile or trace of complicity. I was an exile. And then I did not recognise the language. Where did she get her confidence? After a moment, I realised: it was the book that was talking. Sentences emerged that frightened me: they were

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like real centipedes; they swarmed with syllables and letters, span out their diphthongs and made their double consonants hum; fluting, nasal, broken up with sighs and pauses, rich in unknown words, they were in love with themselves and their meanderings and had no time for me: sometimes they disappeared before I could understand them; at others, I had understood in advance, and they went rolling on nobly towards their ends without deigning me a comma. These words were obviously not meant for me. The tale itself wore its Sunday best: the wood-cutter, the wood-cutter's wife and their daughters, the fairy, all those little people, our fellow-creatures, had acquired majesty; their rags were magnificently described; words left their mark on objects, transforming actions into rituals and events into ceremonies. Someone began to ask questions: my grandfather's publisher, who specialised in putting out school editions, lost no opportunity of exercising his young readers' intelligence. It was as if a child were being quizzed: what would he have done in the wood-cutter's place? Which of the two sisters did he prefer? Why? Did he agree with Babette's punishment? But this child was not entirely me and I was afraid to reply. I did reply, though, my feeble voice grew faint and I felt I was turning into someone else. Anne-Marie, too, with her blind soothsayer's look, was someone else: it was as if I were every mother's child and she were every child's mother. When she stopped reading, I quickly took back the books and carried them off under my arm without a word of thanks.

In the long run, I came to enjoy this change which tore me out of myself: Maurice Bouchor leaned over my childhood with that universal concern which heads of departments have for customers in big stores; that flattered me. I came to prefer manufactured tales to improvised ones; I became sensitive to the unchanging sequence of words: they would come back each time you read them, always the same ones and always in the same order, and I would wait for them. In Anne-Marie's stories, the characters lived haphazardly, as she herself did: they acquired fates. It was like Mass: I was present at the endless reiteration of names and events.

Then I became jealous of my mother and I decided to usurp her role. I made off with a work called *Tribulations d'un Chinois en Chine* and took it away to a junk-room; there, perched on a folding bedstead, I pretended to read: my eyes followed the black lines without skipping a single one and I told myself a story out loud, taking care to pronounce every syllable. I was discovered—or I let myself be discovered—there were cries of admiration, and it was decided that it was time that I was taught the alphabet. I was as zealous as a convert; I even gave myself private lessons: I climbed on to my bedstead with Hector Malot's *Sans Famille*, which I knew by heart and, half-reciting, half-deciphering it, I went through every page one after another: when the last was turned, I knew how to read.

I was wild with delight: those withered voices in their little nature-books, those voices which my grandfather revived with a glance, which he heard and which I did not hear, were mine! I would listen to them, I would fill myself with ceremonious speeches and I would know everything. I was allowed to wander about in the library and I mounted an assault on human knowledge. That was what made me. Later on, I was to hear anti-Semites reproach the Jews a hundred times over for being ignorant of nature's lessons and mysteries. I used to reply: "In that case, I'm more Jewish than they...." I would search vainly in myself for the tufted memories and sweet unreason of rustic childhoods. I never scratched the soil or searched for nests; I never looked for plants or threw stones at birds. But books were my birds and my nests, my pets, my stable, and my countryside; the library was the world trapped in a mirror; it had its infinite breadth, its variety, and its unpredictability. I set off on incredible adventures: it meant climbing on chairs and table, at the risk of provoking avalanches which could have buried me. For a long while, the works on the top shelf remained beyond my reach; others, almost as soon as I found them, were snatched from my hands; more still were hidden: I had taken them, started to read them, and thought I had returned them to their places; it took a week to find them again. I met with some horrible encounters: I would open an album and come on a coloured illustration: hideous insects would swarm before my very eyes. Lying on the carpet, I undertook barren journeys through Fontenelle, Aristophanes, and Rabelais: the sentences resisted me in the same way as objects; I had to watch them, go round them, pretend to move away and then suddenly come back at them to catch them off their guard: most of the time, they preserved their secrets. I was

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La Pérouse, Magellan, and Vasco da Gama; I discovered strange natives: *"Heautontimorouménos"* in a translation of Terence into alexandrines, and *"idiosyncracie"* in a work on comparative literature. *Apocope*, *Chiasme*, *Parangon*, and a hundred other obscure and distant Kaffirs rose up at the turn of a page and their appearance alone threw out the entire paragraph. I only learnt the meanings of these hard, black words ten or fifteen years later and, even to-day, they still remain opaque: they are the leaf-mould of my memory.

THE LIBRARY contained little more than the French and German classics. There were some grammars, too, a few well-known novels, a selection of Maupassant's *Contes Choisis*, some art books—a *Rubens*, a *Van Dyck*, a *Dürer*, and a *Rembrandt*—which my grandfather's pupils had presented to him one New Year. A small world. But the *Grand Larousse* took the place of everything: I would pick a volume at random, from behind the desk, on the last but one shelf, A-BELLO, BELLOC-CH or CI-D, MELE-PO or PR-Z (these associations of syllables had become proper names indicating areas of human knowledge: there was the CI-D region and the PR-Z region, with their fauna and flora, their towns, their great men and their battles): I would lay them down on my grandfather's blotter, open them, and I would go nesting after real birds and chasing after real butterflies perched on real flowers. Men and beasts were there, *in person*: the illustrations were their bodies and the text their souls, their particular essences; outside the walls, you met vague shapes which more or less resembled the archetypes without attaining to their perfection: in the Zoo, the monkeys were less like monkeys and, in the Luxembourg Gardens, men were less like men. A Platonist by nature, I moved from knowledge to its object; I found ideas more real than things, because they were the first to give themselves to me and because they gave themselves like things. I met the universe in books: assimilated, classified, labelled, and studied, but still impressive; and I confused the chaos of my experiences through books with the hazardous course of real events. Hence my idealism which it took me thirty years to undo.

Everyday life was crystal-clear: we used to meet well-balanced people who spoke up loud and clear, based their convictions on healthy principles, on the Wisdom of Nations, and deigned to single themselves out from ordinary persons only by a certain affectedness of the soul to which I was entirely used. Their opinions, no sooner voiced, convinced me by their crystalline, artless truth; if they wanted to justify their actions, they put forward such boring reasons that they could not help but be true; their moral dilemmas, willingly expounded, worried me less than they edified me: they were artificial conflicts resolved in advance and always the same ones; their faults, when they recognised them, carried little weight: their haste and their reasonable but no doubt exaggerated ill-temper had impaired their judgments; fortunately, they had spotted it in time; the faults of the absent, more serious, were never unforgivable: at home, we never ran people down; we recognised, in sorrow, defects of character. I used to listen, understand, and approve, I found these statements reassuring and I was not mistaken because they were meant to reassure: there was nothing that could not be remedied and, deep down, nothing stirred, and the vain movements of the surface could not hide from us the mortuary calm that is our lot.

WHEN OUR VISITORS had said good-bye, I would remain alone, I would escape from this boring cemetery, and I would go and rejoin life and frivolity in books. All I had to do was open one to re-discover in it those anxious, inhuman thoughts whose pomps and shadows passed my understanding, which leapt from one idea to another, so quickly that I slackened my grip, a hundred times a page, and, lost and bewildered, let them go. I witnessed events which my grandfather would unquestionably have deemed improbable and yet which had the resounding truth of the written word. Characters would rise up without a word of warning, fall in love, quarrel, and murder each other; the survivor would be racked with grief and rejoin the friend or the mistress whom he had just murdered in the tomb. What was I to do? Was I expected, like the grown-ups, to blame, congratulate, and forgive? But these individuals did not seem to govern themselves by our principles and their motives, even when supplied, eluded me. Brutus killed his son and so did Mateo Falcone. Therefore the practice seemed fairly common. Yet no one around me had had recourse to it. In Meudon, my grandfather had quarrelled with my uncle Emile and I had heard them shouting

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in the garden: but it did not seem to me that he had thought of killing him. How did he judge fathers who killed their children? I kept aloof: my life was not in danger because I was an orphan and these ritual killings mildly amused me, but, in the stories made out of them, I sensed an approval which baffled me. I had to force myself not to spit on the illustration which showed Horace, with helmet and with a naked sword, chasing after poor Camille. Karl sometimes used to hum:

On n' peut pas ét' plus proch' parents
Que frère et sœur assurément . . .[1]

This worried me: if, by chance, I had been given a sister, would she have been closer to me than Anne-Marie? Or than Karlémami? Then she would have been my mistress. Mistress was still only a shadowy word which I often came across in Corneille's tragedies. Lovers kissed and promised to sleep in the same bed. (A strange custom: why not in twin beds as my mother and I did?) I knew little more but, beneath the glossy surface of the idea, I sensed a hairy mass. In any case, as a brother, I would have been incestuous. I used to dream about it. Origin? A cover-up for forbidden emotions? It may well be. I had an older sister, my mother, and I wanted a younger one. Even to-day—1963—it is the only family relationship which appeals to me.[2] I made the serious mistake of often looking among women for this sister who had never turned up: appeal rejected, ordered to pay costs. Even so, writing these lines, I revive the anger I felt towards Camille's murderer; it is so fresh and so alive that I wonder if Horace's crime is not one of the sources of my anti-militarism: soldiers kill their sisters. I would have given the old sweat what for. The firing-squad, for a start! And a dozen bullets in his guts. I would turn the pages; some printed words would show me my mistake: the sororicide had to be *acquitted*. For a few moments, I would snort and stamp my foot, like a decoyed bull. Then I would quickly stifle my rage. That was how it was; I ought to have taken sides: I was too young. I had got it all wrong; the need for this acquittal was rightly established by the numerous alexandrines which remained obstinately shut to me or which I had impatiently skipped. I used to love this uncertainty and the way the story escaped me on every side: it made a change. I read the concluding pages of *Madame Bovary* twenty times; in the end, I knew whole paragraphs by heart and yet the poor widower's actions did not seem any clearer; he found some letters, was that any reason for letting his beard grow? He glanced at Rodolphe darkly, because he felt bitter towards him—but *what for*? And why did he say to him: "I don't bear you any grudge"? Why did Rodolphe find him "comic and rather despicable"? Afterwards, Charles Bovary died: of grief? of an illness? And why did the doctor open him up when it was all over? I used to love this stubborn, unending resistance; mystified and exhausted, I relished the equivocal pleasure of understanding and yet not understanding: this was the complexity of the world; I found the human heart, which my grandfather discussed freely at home, empty and insipid everywhere except in books. Intoxicating names played on my moods, plunging me into inexplicable terror or melancholy. I used to say "Charbovary" and see, out of nowhere, a tall, bearded man in rags walking about a yard: it was unbearable. At the source of these agonising pleasures was a combination of two contradictory fears. I was afraid of plunging head-first into a mythical universe and wandering about in it forever, in the company of Horace and Charbovary, with no hope of seeing the Rue Le Goff, Karlémami, and my mother again. And, on the other hand, I sensed that these processions of words presented adult readers with significances which escaped me. Through my eyes, I drew into my head poisoned words, infinitely richer than I knew; a strange force reconstructed in me, through speech, stories of angry men who did not concern me, a dreadful grief or the wreck of a life: would I not be infected and die of poisoning? Absorbing the Word and absorbed by the image, I escaped, in the end, only through the incompatibility of these two

[1] "There's certainly no closer tie than that between brother and sister. . . ."

[2] When I was about ten I used to adore reading *The Americans*: in it were a little American and his sister, very innocent, by the way. But I identified myself with the boy and, through him, I loved Biddy, the little girl. For a long time, I have dreamed of writing a short story about two lost and quietly incestuous children. Echoes of this fantasy can be found in my writings: Orestes and Electra in *Les Mouches*, Boris and Ivich in *Les Chemins de la Liberté*, and Boris and Leni in *Les Séquestrés d'Altona*. Only the last couple do anything about it. What attracted me in this family link was not so much being tempted to love than being forbidden to make love; I liked incest, with its mixture of fire and ice, enjoyment and frustration, while it remained platonic.

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simultaneous perils. At dusk, lost in a jungle of words, trembling at the least sound, mistaking the creak of the parquet floor for yelps, I thought I was discovering language in its raw state, without man. With what cowardly relief, what disappointment, I returned to the boredom of family life when my mother came in, put on the light, and said: "My poor darling, you're ruining your eyes!" My face drawn, I would leap up and down, shout, rush and clown about. But even in my re-won childhood, I would worry: *what* were the books talking about? Who wrote them? Why? I confided these anxieties to my grandfather who, on reflection, decided that it was time to liberate me and did it so effectively that it left its mark on me.

FOR A LONG TIME, he had been in the habit of jogging me up and down on his outstretched leg singing: *"A cheval sur mon bidet; quand il trotte il fait des pets,"* and I would snigger. He stopped singing: he sat me on his knee and looked me in the eyes: "I am man," he kept saying in an official voice, "I am man, and nothing human is foreign to me." He used to exaggerate a lot. As Plato expelled poets, so Karl drove engineers, merchants, and probably officers from his Republic. Factories ruined the countryside; of the pure sciences, he enjoyed only purity. My uncle Georges would take us to visit the foundries in Guérigny, where we used to spend the second half of July: it was hot, and rough, ill-dressed men would jostle us; deafened by the immense noise, I used to die of fear and boredom; my grandfather would whistle as he watched the flow of metal, out of politeness, but his eyes remained dead. In Auvergne, on the other hand, in August, he used to ferret about the villages, stop in front of old buildings and tap the brickwork with the end of his walking-stick: "What you see there, my child," he would say animatedly, "is a Gallic-Roman wall." He also appreciated church architecture and, although he loathed papists, he never missed going into churches if they were Gothic; if Romanesque, it depended on his mood. He hardly ever went to concerts, but he had been to them: he liked Beethoven, his pomp and his large orchestras; Bach, too, but without enthusiasm. Sometimes, he would go over to the piano and, without sitting down, would strike a few chords with his stiff fingers: my grandmother would say, with a tight smile: "Charles is composing." Her sons—especially Georges—had become good exponents who loathed Beethoven and preferred chamber music to all else; these differences of taste did not worry my grandfather; he would say amiably: "The Schweitzers are born musicians." A week after my birth, when I seemed to perk up at the clink of a spoon, he had decided that I had a good ear.

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS, flying buttresses, sculpted portals, crucifixion scenes carved in wood or stone, Meditations in verse or poetic Harmonies: such Humanities led us straight to God. The more so, because natural beauty had to be added to them. One and the same breath shaped God's works and great human works; one and the same rainbow shone in the spray of waterfalls, sparkled between the lines of Flaubert and gleamed in Rembrandt's chiaroscuros: it was the Spirit. The Spirit spoke to God about Men and it bore witness of God to men. In Beauty, my grandfather saw the presence of Truth made flesh and the source of the loftiest aspirations. In certain exceptional circumstances—when a storm broke in the mountains or when Victor Hugo was inspired—it was possible to attain to the Sublime Point, where Truth, Beauty, and Good became one.

I had found my religion: nothing seemed more important to me than a book. I saw the library as a temple. A priest's grandson, I lived on the roof of the world, on the sixth floor, perched on the highest branch of the Central Tree: its trunk was the lift-shaft. I came and went on the balcony, cast an overhanging glance at the passers-by, waved through the railings at Lucette Moreau, my neighbour, who was my age and had my fair curls and youthful feminity, and retired into my *cella* or *pronaos*, but never went down *in person*: when my mother took me to the Luxembourg Gardens—in other words every day—I would set foot on lower regions but my glorious body never left its perch and I believe it is still there. Every man has his natural place; it is not pride or worth that settles his height: childhood decides everything. Mine is a sixth floor in Paris with a view of the rooftops. For a long time, I suffocated in valleys and plains bore me down: I dragged myself round the planet Mars and the pressure crushed me; all I had to do to be happy again was climb on to a molehill: I was back on my symbolic sixth floor and once again breathing the rarified air of Belles-Lettres, the Universe lay spread at my feet and each thing

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was humbly begging for a name, and giving it one was like both creating it and taking it. Without this fundamental illusion, I should never have written.

To-day, April 22nd, 1963, I am correcting this manuscript on the tenth floor of a new house: through the open window, I can see a cemetery, Paris, and the blue hills of Saint-Cloud. This shows my persistence. Yet everything has changed. If, as a child, I had wished to deserve this lofty position, my love of pigeon-lofts would have to evidence some play of ambition or vanity or a compensation for my lack of height. But, no; it was not a question of climbing up my holy tree: I was there and I refused to get down; it was not that I wished to set myself up above men: I wanted to live in pure ether among the aery likenesses of Things. Later on, far from clinging to balloons, I made every effort to sink down: I had to put lead soles on my shoes. With luck, I sometimes managed to brush, on naked sands, against underwater species, whose names I had to invent. At other times, I was powerless: an irresistible lightness buoyed me up. In the end, my altimeter went haywire, and sometimes I am a Cartesian diver, sometimes a deep sea diver, and often both at the same time, as suits our game: I dwell in the air by habit and I nose about down below without too much hope.

Yet I had to be told about authors. My grandfather did so with discretion but without warmth. He taught me the names of famous men; alone, I used to recite the list to myself, from Hesiod to Hugo, without a mistake; they were the Saints and the Prophets. Charles Schweitzer, so he said, worshipped them. Yet they disturbed him: their unwelcome presence prevented him from attributing the works of Man directly to the Holy Spirit. He also cherished a secret preference for the anonymous, for builders who had had the modesty to stand aside from their cathedrals and for innumerable authors of popular songs. He did not hate Shakespeare because his identity was not established. Or Homer, for the same reason. Or several others of whom it was not certain that they had existed. For those who had neither wished nor been able to wipe out the traces of their life he found excuses provided that they were dead. But he condemned his contemporaries wholesale, except for Anatole France and Courteline who made him feel happy. Charles Schweitzer took a proud delight in the consideration shown his great age, his culture, his looks, and his virtues, and this disciple of Luther did not refrain from thinking, in true biblical fashion, that the Eternal had blessed his House. At table, he sometimes composed himself sufficiently to take an off-hand view of his life and conclude: "My children, how good it is to have nothing for which to reproach yourself." His fits of anger, his majesty, his pride, and his taste for the sublime concealed a timidity of spirit which stemmed from his religion, his century, and his milieu, the University. For this reason, he felt a secret disgust for the *monstres sacrés* of his library, out-and-out blackguards whose books he regarded, in his heart of hearts, as absurdities. I was mistaken: I took the reserve which appeared beneath his forced enthusiasm for the severity of a judge; his priesthood raised him above them. In any case, so the minister of the cult whispered to me, genius is merely a loan: it has to be earned through great suffering and through modestly yet firmly endured trials; in the end you hear voices and write at their dictation. Between the first Russian revolution and the first world war, fifteen years after the death of Mallarmé, at the same time that Daniel de Fontanin discovered *Les Nourritures Terrestres*, a 19th-century man was imposing on his grandson ideas current under Louis-Philippe. This is how, they say, peasant habits can be explained: the fathers went off to the fields, leaving the children in the hands of the grandparents. I started off with a twenty-five-year handicap. Should I explain? I do not know: in our fluctuating societies, delays sometimes give you a bit of a start. Be that as it may, I was flung this bone to gnaw and I did it so effectively that I can see the light through it. My grandfather had hoped to disgust me quietly with writers, those go-betweens. He achieved the opposite result: I confused talent with merit. These honest men were like myself: when I was very good or when I endured my boils manfully, I had the right to a few laurels or a reward; that was childhood. Karl Schweitzer showed me other children, supervised, put to the test and rewarded like myself, who had managed to remain my age all their lives. Not having any brothers or sisters or companions, I made them my first friends. They had loved, suffered harshly, like the heroes of their novels and, most important, they had ended up all right; I evoked their torments with rather cheerful sympathy: how happy these

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lads must have been when they really were miserable: "What a bit of luck! A good line will be born!"

In my eyes, they were not dead, at least, not quite: they were transformed into books. Corneille was a fat man with a gnarled red face and a leather back, who smelt of glue. This stern, difficult character, full of hard words, had corners which bruised my thighs when I carried him. But as soon as he was open, he presented me with his illustrations, soft and dark as secrets. Flaubert was a small, bound, evil-smelling creature, dotted with freckles. Victor Hugo, the many-sided, nested on every shelf at the same time. So much for the bodies; the souls haunted the works: the pages were windows, there was a face pressed against the glass from outside and someone was watching me; I pretended not to notice anything and went on reading, my eyes riveted to the words, beneath the gaze of the dead Chateaubriand. These anxieties did not last; the rest of the time, I adored my playmates. I set them above all else and I learnt without surprise that Charles V of Germany had picked up Titian's paint-brush: so what? that was what a prince was for. Yet I did not respect them: why should I have praised them for being great? They were only doing their duty. I blamed the others for being inferior. In short, I had got everything upside down and I was making the rule of the exception: the human race became a select committee—surrounded by friendly beasts.

Above all, my grandfather treated them too badly for me to be able to take them entirely seriously. He had stopped reading after Victor Hugo's death; when he had nothing else to do, he re-read him. But his business was translation. In his heart of hearts, the author of the *Deutsches Lesebuch* regarded world literature as his raw material. He grudgingly classified authors by order of merit, but this superficial hierarchy barely concealed his preferences, which were utilitarian: Maupassant made the best unseens for German students; Goethe, beating Gottfried Keller by a head, was unequalled for compositions. As a humanist, my grandfather thought little of novels; as a professor, he valued them greatly because of their vocabulary. In the end, he could only tolerate selected passages, and I saw him, a few years later, drooling over an extract from *Madame Bovary*, selected by Misonneau for his *Lectures*, while a complete Flaubert had been waiting twenty years for his good pleasure. I felt that he lived off these dead men, which did not simplify my relations with them: under pretext of worshipping them, he kept them in bonds and did not scruple to carve them into slices to transpose them the more easily from one language to another.

I discovered their grandeur and misery simultaneously. Mérimée had the misfortune to suit the *Cours Moyen*; consequently, he led a double life; on the fourth floor of the library, Colomba was a fresh-looking dove with a hundred wings, frigid, offering herself and systematically ignored; no glance ever ravished her. But on the bottom shelf, this same virgin was imprisoned in a small, grubby, brown, smelly book; neither the story nor the language had changed, but there were notes in German and a vocabulary; I learnt besides, a scandal unmatched since the rape of Alsace-Lorraine, that it had been published in Berlin. My grandfather put this book into his brief-case twice a week; he had covered it in stains, red marks, and burns, and I loathed it: it was Mérimée humiliated: each syllable fell beneath my gaze separately as they did, at the Institute, from my grandfather's mouth. Printed in Germany to be read by Germans, what were these known yet unrecognisable signs, anyway, but counterfeits of French words? Yet another spy case: all you had to do was scratch them to discover, beneath their Gallic disguise, German words on the alert. I came to wonder if there were not two Colombas, one fierce and true, the other false and didactic, just as there are two Yseults.

The trials of my young companions convinced me that I was their equal. I had neither their gifts nor their merits and I was not yet considering writing but, as a priest's grandson, I was superior to them in birth: I was unquestionably dedicated: not to their always rather shocking martyrdoms but to some priesthood; I would be a guardian of culture, like Charles Schweitzer. And then I was alive and very active: I still did not know how to slice up the dead but I imposed my whims on them: I took them in my arms, carried them, laid them on the parquet floor, opened them, closed them again, and tore them from non-existence only to plunge them back into it: these human trunks were my dolls and I felt sorry for their wretched paralysed state of survival called immortality. My grandfather encouraged these familiarities: all children were inspired and they

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had nothing for which to envy poets who were quite simply children themselves. I was mad about Courteline[3] and I would chase the cook into the kitchen to read her *Théodore cherche des allumettes* out loud. My infatuation was found amusing; it was developed with care and attention and was made into an avowed passion. One fine day my grandfather said to me casually: "Courteline must be a good fellow. If you like him so much, why don't you write to him?" I wrote: Charles Schweitzer guided my hand and decided to leave a few spelling mistakes in my letter. Some newspapers reproduced it, a few years ago, and I read it with a certain annoyance. I signed off with the words "your friend-to-be," which seemed quite natural to me. Voltaire and Corneille were my familiars; how could a *living* writer have refused my friendship? Courteline turned it down and did right: by replying to the child, he would have stumbled on the grandfather. At the time, we judged his silence severely. "I grant," said Charles, "he has a lot of work. But even so, you do answer a child."

Even to-day, this minor vice of familiarity is still with me. I treat these famous dead like school-friends; I talk bluntly about Baudelaire and Flaubert and when I am reproached, I always feel like replying: "Mind your own business. Your geniuses have belonged to me, I have held them in my hands and loved them passionately and with deep irreverence. Am I to wear kid gloves with them?" But I got rid of Karl's humanism, that prelate's humanism, the day that I realised that every man is all men. How sad it is to be cured: language loses its magic; the heroes of the pen, once my equals, stripped of their privileges, have returned to the ranks: I wear mourning for them twice over.

WHAT I HAVE just written is false. True. Not true or false like all that is written about madmen or about men. I set down the facts as accurately as memory permitted. But how far did I believe in my madness? This is the basic question and I cannot make up my mind about it. I realised afterwards that one could know everything about our affections except their strength; that is to say, their sincerity. Actions will not serve for standards unless it has been proved that they are not gestures, which is not always easy. For instance, alone in the company of adults, I was an adult in miniature, and I read adult books; that already rings false because, at the same time, I remained a child. I am not making out that I was guilty: that is how it was, that is all; even so, my explorations and searches did form part of the Family Comedy and gave delight and I was expecting it; yes, I was expecting it; every day, a wonder child revived manuscripts which his grandfather had stopped reading. I lived beyond my age as people live beyond their means: enthusiastically, exhaustingly, expensively, and all for show. Almost before I had pushed open the library door, I was in the guts of a lazy old man: the large desk, the red and black ink-stains on the pink blotter, the ruler, the glue-pot, the stale smell of tobacco and, in winter, the red glow of the Salamander and the clink of mica, all this was Karl personified, in essence: it was all that I needed to enter into a state of grace, so I ran to books. Was I sincere? What does that mean? How could I pinpoint—especially after so many years—the intangible, shifting frontier that divides possession from charlatanism? I used to lie on my stomach, facing the windows, a book open in front of me, a glass of water with a dash of wine to my right and a jam sandwich on a plate to my left. Even when alone, I was performing: Anne-Marie and Karlémami had turned these pages long before I was born and it was their knowledge which lay there before my eyes; in the evenings, I was asked: "What have you read? What did you make of it?" I was expecting it, I was in labour and I gave birth to a precocious remark; avoiding grown-ups through reading was the best way of communicating with them; when they were not there, their future gaze entered me by the occiput, came out again through the pupils and shot along, at floor-level, those oft-read sentences which I was reading for the first time.

Had I changed so much since the time when I pretended to decipher *Le Chinois en Chine* before I knew the alphabet? No: the game was continuing. The door would open behind me and someone would come to see "what I was up to": I would cheat, leap to my feet, put Musset back in his place, and immediately go on tiptoe, arms outstretched, and take down the heavy Corneille; my passion could be gauged from my efforts and, behind me, I could hear an impressed voice whisper: "He must *like* Corneille!" I did not like him: the alexandrines put me off. Luckily, the publisher had published only the best-known tragedies *in extenso*; he

[3] Courteline (1858–1929): author of light comedies.

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gave the titles and plots of the others: these were what interested me: "Rodelinde, wife of Pertharite, king of the Lombards and conquered by Grimoald, is urged by Unulphe to give her hand to a foreign prince...." I knew Rodogune, Théodore, and Agésilas before Le Cid and Cinna; I filled my mouth with sonorous names, my heart with sublime emotions, and I took pains not to muddle the family relationships. They also said: "The child's eager to learn; he devours *Larousse*!" and I let them say it. But I was not really learning: I had discovered that the dictionary contained summaries of plays and novels; I doted on them.

I liked to please and I wanted to steep myself in culture: each day I recharged myself with holiness. Casually, sometimes: it was enough to lie down flat and turn the pages; my little friends' works frequently acted as prayer-wheels. At the same time, I experienced joy and terror *in real earnest*; I sometimes used to forget my part and rush off at breakneck speed, borne away by a mad whale which was nothing less than the world. Make what you will of it! In any case, my eyes worked on the words: I had to test them and decide on their meaning: in the long run, the Comedy of Culture cultivated me.

YET I DID some *genuine* reading: away from the sanctuary, in our bedroom or under the dining-room table; I did not discuss this with anyone and no one, except my mother, discussed it with me. Anne-Marie had taken my assumed fits of rage seriously. She confided her anxieties to Mamie. Her grandmother was a sure ally: "Charles goes too far," she said. "He's forcing the child, I've seen him do it. And where will we be when the child's all dried up?" The two women also alluded to strain and meningitis. It would have been dangerous and futile to make a frontal assault on my grandfather: so they came in at his flank. During one of our walks, Anne-Marie stopped, as if by chance, in front of the kiosk which still stands at the corner of the Boulevard Saint-Michel and the Rue Soufflot: I saw some marvellous pictures and their garish colours fascinated me; I wanted them and I got them. The trick had worked: each week I wanted *Cri-Cri*, *L'Epatant*, *Les Vacances*, Jean de la Hire's *Les Trois Boy-Scouts* and Arnould Galopin's *Tour de Monde en Hydravion* which appeared in serial form on Thursdays. From one Thursday to the next, I used to think about the Eagle of the Andes, Marcel Dunot, the iron-fisted boxer, and Christian the airman, far more than my friends Rabelais and Vigny. My mother went in search of works which would restore me to my childhood: first there were *"les petits livres roses,"* monthly collections of fairy-stories, and then, gradually, *Les Enfants du Capitaine Grant*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, and *Les Cinq Sous de Lavarède*. I preferred the extravagant Paul d'Ivoi to Jules Verne, who was too well-balanced. But whoever the author, I adored the books of the Hetzel collection, little theatres with gold-tasselled red covers for curtains: their edges, dusted with gold, were the footlights. I owe my first experiences of beauty to these magic boxes—and not to the measured phrases of Chateaubriand. When I opened them, I forgot all else: was this reading? No, it was dying of ecstasy: my self-oblivion also gave birth to natives armed with assegais, the bush, and an explorer in a white helmet. I was *vision*, and I drowned Aouda's handsome dark cheeks and Phileas Fogg's side-whiskers in light. Freed from itself at last, the little wonder became pure amazement. Eighteen inches from the floor was born a happiness, with neither lord nor ties, perfect. The New World at first seemed even more disturbing than the Old: there was plunder and killing; blood flowed freely. Indians, Hindus, Mohicans, and Hottentots carried off the young girl, bound her ageing father and swore that he would die of the most horrible of tortures. It was pure Evil. But it was only there to prostrate itself at the feet of Good: in the next chapter, everything would be back to normal. Brave Whites would make a hecatomb of the savages and sever the bonds of the father who would fling himself into his daughter's arms. Only the wicked died—and a few very marginal good men, whose deaths were among the story's incidental expenses. Besides, death itself was asepticised: you fell with your arms spread and a small round hole under your left breast or, if guns had not been invented, the guilty men were "put to the sword." I liked this pretty turn of phrase: I imagined the straight white gleam of the blade; it entered as if into butter and exited through the outlaw's back, who fell to the ground without shedding a drop of blood. Sometimes death was even absurd: like that of the Saracen who, in *La Filleule de Roland*, I think, charged his horse against a crusader's; the paladin brought his sabre down hard on his head and sliced him from top to toe; a Gustave Doré drawing illus-

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trated this mishap. How amusing it was! The two halves of the body, separated, began to flop down, each describing a semi-circle round a stirrup; the horse reared in astonishment. For several years, I could not look at the illustration without laughing till I cried. At last I had what I needed: the Enemy, whom I could hate, but who was in the long run harmless because his schemes came to naught and were even, in spite of his efforts and his devilish cunning, serving the cause of Good; I realised, in fact, that a return to order was always accompanied by some form of progress: heroes were rewarded and received honours, tokens of esteem, and money; thanks to their daring, a territory had been conquered or a work of art removed from the natives and borne away to our museums; the young girl would fall in love with the explorer who had saved her life and it would all end in a marriage. From these books and magazines I derived my most personal fantasy-world: that of optimism.

These books long remained secret; Anne-Marie did not even have to warn me: aware of their unworthiness, I did not breathe a word of them to my grandfather. I was mixing with low company, taking liberties and spending my holidays in a brothel, but I never forgot that my true self had remained in a place of worship. Why bother to shock the priest by telling him I had erred and strayed? Karl eventually caught me; he got cross with the two women and they, taking advantage of a moment when he was pausing for breath, blamed it all on me: I had seen the magazines and adventure stories, I had wanted them and asked for them, so how could they refuse me? This cunning lie put my grandfather's back to the wall: it was I, I alone, who had betrayed Colomba with this garish ribaldry. I, the child prophet, the young Pythoness, the Eliakim of Belles-Lettres, was showing a fierce tendency to all that was vile. It was up to him to choose: either I stopped making prophecies or my tastes had to be respected without any attempt to understand them. As a father, Charles Schweitzer would have burned the lot; as a grandfather, he settled for pained indulgence. I asked no more and I went on quietly about my double life. It has never ended: even to-day, I would rather read the "Série Noire" than Wittgenstein.

Sailor Ashore

Anchored firmly to her body, now he knows
The crash of rigging, burst seams and sudden flood;
Who hitherto, loose prey of all the elements,
Was blasted by a breeze, wrecked in an inch of mud.

D. J. Enright

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Louis Kronenberger

A Taste of Money

On "Upper Bohemia," or the Writer in America Today

LITTLE IN OUR TIME has been oftener quoted than Shaw's retort to Samuel Goldwyn when, in the course of their negotiations, the businessman stressed art and the artist, money. As a rebuke to the cant men use to disguise their venality, it was altogether fitting; but perhaps its deeper interest lay in Shaw's being as distinctly truthful as Goldwyn might seem disingenuous. I am also not sure that Shaw didn't know more about money than Goldwyn; or that he didn't care more. In any case, Shaw's steady insistence, as a great and very famous writer, on his due—his refusal to bate a sixpence from his royalties, or cut a line out of his plays—set a monumental example which has doubtless fortified many writers since. Nor is it odd that it was Shaw who did it, for it was largely what was odd in Shaw that made him. He wanted money for no usual reasons. During his most affluent years, he had a rich wife and no children; did not drink, smoke, gamble, eat meat, have sex or live grandly. He wanted money for prideful or ironic reasons. Certainly it could help heal the hurts inflicted by his shabby-genteel background and his early London struggles. As a puritan again, Shaw—rather like the Quakers—found in money-making his prime worldly satisfaction. As a writer, it somehow gratified him to be a better businessman than the businessman. As a Socialist, it might amuse him to be a shrewder capitalist than the capitalist.

In any case, he remained our century's great example of a distinguished writer who made a large fortune—and by being as intransigent about his principles as about his payments. And yet, if it rejoiced the puritan in Shaw, it just a little jolts the puritan in us. Shaw, on money, got to be a trifle too insistent: however condign the rebuke to Goldwyn, it too much reassured all Goldwyn's scribbling minions. The minions might not live like Shaw—without meat, or cigars, or the rest—and might not write like him, either; but it helped them to know that in one very important respect they and he had something in common.

Untempted by the world's fleshpots, Shaw was also unmoved by its glitter. This was rarer than it may seem. In spite of the valid identification of artists with Bohemia, the two real truths in bohemianism are the artist's loathing of bourgeois morality and his frequent lack of good sense about money. But he is bohemian, not ascetic; dislikes Suburbia far more than society; is anti-Wall Street, not anti-wealth. At times indeed he can acquire very luxurious tastes, and be attracted by resplendent and seigniorial backgrounds. Snobbery has almost never been seriously probed, if only because few people have viewed it as a serious subject. But in various forms it can go very deep, and it frequently does so with writers.

It is too bad that the word *snob* applies to-day equally to some one over-impressed by his own social position, and to some one over-impressed by other peoples'; the old distinction of *snob* (the aspiring outsider) and *nob* (the man of position) had real value. More often than we

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may suspect, the writer is an aspiring outsider. We need only think of the spell that the great world has exerted in all ages on literary men, whether Congreve or Pope, Swift or Sterne, Goethe or Balzac, Henry James or Proust, Scott Fitzgerald or Evelyn Waugh; and again, we need only think why. Being the most imaginative and memory-haunted of men, the writer may, to begin with, be a romantic—in love with a kind of patrician ideal, with a vision of breeding and elegance. His imagination may even make an ass of him; we need only remember (I think it's in Proust) some one's rapture at being asked to a very grand party and his boredom after he goes to it. And on just those terms, imagination in any perceptive writer holds open the door while irony enters the room. But the memory-haunted writer may, in a most downright sense, remember slights and snubs that frayed his early life. Or, very simply, the writer could not bear the truth—Meredith, that his father had been in trade; Dickens, that his father had been in prison. Besides, there is even more snobbery about possessing money than about lacking it. By itself money is thought vulgar; it must be chaperoned by something socially acceptable.

And if there is a romantic reason for writers to climb, and a realistic reason as well, there is also a professional one—the interest that many writers have in "manners" and the social scene. Much of this plainly calls for first-hand knowledge. Beyond that, writers can have a desire for money and position thrust upon them—from their being given a taste of luxury that creates an appetite for it.

ALL THESE MATTERS vary greatly, of course; and to a large number of writers they do not apply at all. But often one element or another does apply; and even where there is no social aspiration, there can be a cultural or purely economic one. The great point about writers and money to-day is their unprecedented opportunities for making it. It is all too easy to exaggerate the status of writers *as a whole*—for most of them the economic struggle is still painfully acute, which must be borne in mind with everything that follows. All the same, relatively many writers, often serious and good writers, have the sort of incomes to-day that a bare generation ago were confined to a handful of great names, or to authors of best-sellers and popular stage hits. In to-day's age of diversified literary rights, of book-clubs and paperbacks and digests, of serials and syndicates, of dramatisations and movie sales, of permissions and high-paying journalism, of radio, of TV for one's writings and TV for oneself, of lecturing and recordings, of grants and fellowships, of visiting professorships and residencies—an age in which one book can have nine lives and one fee can have six figures—a great many writers, despite high costs and high taxes, can live in the same world, indeed on the same street, as the rich and the prominent.

WITH THIS CHANGE in situation has come a decided change in attitude. The serious writer needn't think himself a name for the few, or Grub Street an address for the future. Nor need he see, between money and high standards, any necessary clash. Opportunity may not yet have knocked at his door, but it is assumed to know where he lives. Moreover, the moment Opportunity has knocked, all sorts of helpful other people will be writing and phoning and coming to call. Whoever invented the alphabet was clearly writer-conscious, putting the agent, *and* the accountant, *and* the analyst, at the very beginning. But even with so large a staff—or thanks to it—the writer can prosper. In his progress upward, he will use no executive elevators, and wherever he goes must still be Upper Bohemia. Upper Bohemia may picket Park Avenue; but it must often—by living on both sides of it—have to cross its own picket lines. And its children's schools, as it progresses, become less progressive; its views, as it advances, grow less advanced.

The point of all this is a quite concrete one: that there exist whole clusters of people in the arts who live *expensively*—at times through inherited wealth or moneyed marriages, but oftenest from what they earn. If we look for direct forebears on a *group* basis, we perhaps most readily find them in the Algonquin group of the 1920s.[1] Here were people with cityfied interests and sophisticated tastes who, by way of Broadway and Hollywood, or of the light-touch writing that came to be centered in *The New Yorker*, made and spent a good deal of money. Witty and worldly, they were moderately concerned with culture and madly competitive about games; if they were lightweights, they effected—*The New Yorker* is the best proof—a kind of lightweight revolution. The most

[1] Among its members were Robert Benchley, Dorothy Parker, George S. Kaufman, Alexander Woollcott, Heywood Broun.

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entertaining group of their time, and the deftest at group-promotion, they became in varying degrees the friends, the pets, the court jesters of the unstuffy rich, who wanted to be entertained. Even before the Algonquin set, of course, many individual writers had both the means and the desire to live handsomely; yet even much later, scarcely any other literary circle had an aura of expensive living about it. It is noteworthy how many good writers went to places like Yaddo and the Macdowell Colony; or had guest cottages on rich men's estates; or, if flush, rented a place for the summer; or commonly—which fitted their tastes and their purses alike—contrived to live abroad.

CERTAINLY, DURING THIS PERIOD, writers had their windfalls and fat years, and accordingly their sprees and splurges. But, even where their bank balances could support stylish living, their anti-bourgeois convictions often protested it. They did not, as so often to-day, live like rich people, or keep up their end with the rich people they went with. But the salient point is not that till recently writers seldom lived like rich men, it's that they didn't live like businessmen. They had agents to handle their work, and might seek out a "tax man" each year, from sheer ignorance of the tax laws. But few even very successful writers had agents in the sense they do to-day; indeed, they couldn't have had them in the sense they do to-day—as operating a vast, complex switchboard plugging in on all the sources of revenue I have already enumerated. And few writers a generation ago could have needed accountants and lawyers in the sense they do to-day. To-day, just how they receive payment, and just when, bulks as large as how much payment they receive. To-day, there is a labyrinth of technicalities to thread, of deductions to master; and perhaps such writers' biggest problems to-day involve real estate and the stock market, trust funds and self-incorporations. Many writers to-day are businessmen, not in the sense that they personally look after their own finances, but in the sense that they don't—that they employ experts. And the successful writer's day means, exactly like the businessman's, sessions with a secretary, all sorts of business letters and phone calls, an appointment at 10, a conference at 12, a business lunch at one, and very likely a cocktail or dinner date with a business side to it. If all these things on any one day are very unlikely, a day without several of them is even more so.

THUS FAR I am writing of those at the top. But, numerically, there are a good many writers at the top: if not many in proportion to the whole, far more than there have ever been before, and far faster in soaring upward. But—to move decidedly down—even in a world of notoriously inadequate incomes, the academic world, one finds many and diverse new sources of income. I don't mean salaries, which have generally risen at about the rate of living costs. It is rather how many teachers and professors are now editing textbooks and paperbacks; are now published in well-paying magazines, and appearing on radio and TV; are now lecturing extensively, and winning fellowships and grants.

Nor does this apply only to big academic names, or to teachers with outside reputations. The door, now, opens and widens for quite young men, men who are creating a new breed of professor—men who lace their scholarship with sass, who can be at once academic and avant-garde, who go on cultural sight-seeing, and even slumming, tours. One particular field for them is the theatre; in the colleges themselves, "the theatre of the absurd," for example, has won many season bookings; seldom has a gospel of meaninglessness started such a scramble for meanings. Actually humour, satire, irony, wit, appear more and more on the academic menu. Urbanity is not often on it, being still too big a problem for the chef; but the sense of change is noticeable, the degree of change enlivening.

THE WRITER'S NEW STATUS—or, at any rate, new scope—constitutes a genuine gain. Many financial opportunities have opened for the better type of writer, often towards desirable ends. A serious article needs to be written on the pros and cons, the pluses and minuses, of superior writers who currently address large popular audiences in magazines, on TV, on the lecture platform. Certainly the mass audience is getting far better than its normal fare; and if not many in the audience are converted or even much stirred, that only stresses the glacier-like slowness of solving the problem. In any case, enough good writers to-day have such audiences to constitute a kind of working minority. They are not going to win anyone over from Yerby's level to Yeats'; indeed, their real value may lie less in making cultural recruits than in halting cultural deserters. A great American misfortune is the disintegration of the college graduate in the twenty years after he graduates—his loss of in-

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terest in what he had become acquainted with, his lack of interest in anything else. It is just such back-sliding readers (who have defaulted to the "wrong" magazines) that, by way of the finer voices in them, might be reclaimed.

In contributing to mass media, the writer himself may often have to simplify, but he need not falsify, and need sometimes not change a comma. To be sure, there may be a more than merely ironic disadvantage involved. The good writer's fringe benefits may be turning into his real financial stake, so that the poet makes money largely off anthology permissions; the playwright counts most on that worse kind of audience, the special-performance "benefit" audience; the novelist most prospers on a hack stage-version or film-version of his novel. And if the tail, beyond wagging the dog, is making rather a lap-dog of it to boot, that in itself is no threat to the writer's *creative* career; it can possibly be the one way to ensure it. And certain fringe benefits are, for author and culture alike, true benefits—the serious paperback readers, the university lectures, the poetry readings and recordings at a high level.

THE WRITER'S changing financial status necessarily means a change in his psychology. One of the great cultural phenomena of our time is what the sociologist will eventually find a jargon phrase for, but what quite simply can be called the luxury hand-out.

I mean all the forms of expense-account high living that many people earlier enjoyed only vicariously, via magazines and movies. To-day, even quite unimportant writers frequently share in them, and at a high level. The entertainment of fairly unimportant businessmen, however expensive, has seldom much style to it: it runs to the flashier "name" restaurants; to hit-musicals, prize-fights, "World Series" baseball games, bars and night clubs. But, for the not very notable writer—who may well be a professor—magazine or publishing-house hospitality often means elegant restaurants, distinguished clubs, dinner with far better known people, besides literary lunch and cocktail parties. The same writer's lecturing involves luxury hotels and rich men's homes. All this becomes part of his professional life, and thus a conditioning factor of his own life. Moreover, along with the luxury hand-out, there now goes what might be called the swapped milieu. As the less stodgy bourgeois and professional world cultivates an artist-world informality, the artist tends towards more stylish and traditional living. The two groups share a penchant for a sort of *couleur-de-rose* peasant culture; the unstuffy rich eschew butlers and dinner jackets for buffet suppers and itinerant bar-tenders; the artist-world fancies good wines and *cordon bleu* cooking, the very same bar-tenders and on occasion a caterer.

The fact that the two styles of living have grown largely interchangeable indicates something new for the writer, whether in terms of income or of inclination. Upper Bohemia, in one form or another, is an old tradition—but mostly with cultivated non-artists, with well-to-do people of "background" who want to keep what seems right with their world and slough off what seems oppressive. They want Bohemia's casualness without its messiness, they want traditionalism's well-bred comfort without its gentility. Something like this has also characterised *writers* of "background": one thinks of Bloomsbury or Gramercy Park. Their Upper Bohemias often acquire an academic air, or a snobbish and eventually stuffy one. Moreover, writers in such milieus can get to be rather dangerously lionised, or, even more dangerously, tamed. In general, America's writers have lived a more careless life than this, whether from a lack of means, or of roots, or of desire. Certain writers might retain from their early life certain touchstones; but at least till well on in years they wanted something freer and unritualised. Or, if the Left Banks and the Provincetowns and the Majorcas were ritualised in their way, it was an anti-bourgeois way.

WHAT THE OLD BOHEMIANISM signified was not just a frequent lack of money but a fundamental unconcern for it. Some of its insouciance towards money may have been rationalisation; or a prevailing radicalism; or a self-dramatising romanticism. And certainly want of money could cause serious dislocations, could ruin lives and overturn careers. But there was yet a pretty deep-seated feeling that the terms of economic success, even the terms of bourgeois security, came too high. It was one thing for the Goldwyns to try to fatten their bank accounts by talking up "art"; that was an old, old dodge. But the artist himself—and beyond any romanticising—had a recognition of his special role. He might at times be making a virtue of necessity, he might elevate the personal mess he had made of things into martyrdom. But the sense of vocation was not just high-flown or self-congratulatory; there went with it an awareness of

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what it entailed—of the people it differed with, the conventions it quarrelled with, the sanctities it defied.

To be sure, plenty of serious and gifted artists wanted to make money, wanted to make a lot of it; and a number of them did. Some, like Trollope, were entirely businesslike in their writing habits. Yet the fundamental attitude was different if only because the existing circumstances were. Opportunities were fewer; no book had nine lives. Moreover, Bohemian living was not just a protest against bourgeois standards, it was a way of adjusting to economic ups and downs. Writers' lives were often makeshift and nomadic less from having no roots in a community than from having no stake in it. Owning a house meant sweating over a mortgage; possessions had, for a second home, the pawnshop; and banks were for borrowing money, not saving it.

WRITING is the legatee to-day of what, whether or not it has reformed our culture, has in some sense revolutionised it. In spite (or because) of all the class-*versus*-mass distinctions, and all the battles of the brows, a much widened market exists for capable writers.[2] Such writers can be had simultaneously, at every brow level—can be read in the same month in *Partisan Review*, *The New Yorker*, and *Look*; can be bought on the same day in a scholarly edition, a paperback abridgement, and a popular Digest; can be heard in the same week at Harvard, The New School, and on David Susskind's TV Panel. "Pop" culture, indeed, is acquiring much of the character of the old pop concerts. Just as, along with Strauss and von Suppé, the concerts offered the more accessible works of Mozart and Beethoven, so to-day radio and TV provide great audiences with morsels, and sometimes tenderised meat, from the classics—and from to-day's avant-garde and "controversial" highbrows. Beyond that, on radio and TV there are all sorts of education and classroom programmes; of talks by writers and critics; of poets' readings[3]; and of plays and music. What percentage of the total audience tune in on such things I don't know; but however small, it is huge compared to any pre-radio or TV audience. What percentage of the programmes themselves would pass a cultural Pure-Food-and-Drug Act, I don't know either; but that they very much benefit living artists financially seems certain.

In that very certainty, there is for the have-not writers as well as the haves, for the beginner as well as the veteran, the sense that, with no taint of corruption, the pot of gold lies very close to hand. And already, in certain domains of art, the rewards are blazingly visible. A dozen years after Madison Avenue became a synonym for the big money in advertising and TV, it could as easily, through its art galleries, have become one for the big money in modern painting. In fact it is in painting and the theatre that the arts have most become a business—and the artist a businessman in how he functions, a rich man in how he lives. On a very large small scale, there exists to-day an Upper Bohemia that in its standard of living is wholly top bracket. Its people have the same town and country places as the leisure class; the same kind of servants, of clothes, and food, and cars; the same architects and interior decorators, the same accommodations in the same ships and hotels. Nor can they be distinguished from Park Avenue on any basis of "Bohemian" morality. Drinking, drug-taking, and every form of sexual freedom are as decided stigmata to-day of the rich man's world as of the artist's. No artist can any longer claim to be a Bohemian or a rebel—or an artist—merely by invoking Priapus or Dionysius.

THE THEATRE decidedly provides what is most comic and corrupting in the way of "creative" success. Part of what is both is inherent, from the theatre's own knack for being flashy and its need of being publicised. But part of it derives from Broadway's get-rich-quickness.

The classic symbol of this, a generation ago, was Moss Hart, literally stepping out of his clothes to turn his bare back on his past and embark on a "gold-garter" period that, thirty years later, was simply a vast penthouse one. And the symbol has become something of a pattern. There are, for example, theatre people virtually never seen after dark out of evening clothes. One such, a man who first achieved notice celebrating a humbler side of the garment industry, once hailed me at an opening with: "How d'you suppose I just *knew* I shouldn't dress to-night?" When, rather staggered, I said solemnly: "After all, it's a Monday night—and raining at that," "No, no, no," he answered.

[2] A reporter on the New York *Post* described the symposium atmosphere of the first Patterson–Liston fight with Budd Schulberg, Ben Hecht, A. J. Liebling, Gerald Kersh, Norman Mailer, and James Baldwin, all at the ringside covering it.

[3] Many poets to-day, I imagine, make more money from their readings than from their writings.

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"We just *knew*—the *X*'s aren't dressed either, and I assure you we didn't consult one another!"

What is peculiarly comic is that the splashiness, and the taking it seriously, seem most marked in Broadway comedy writers. Doubtless they have got their own way of joking about it all, of being sure to get it said first. All the same, it is not for them a joke. More interestingly, not one of these elegantly fashionable comedy writers has written, with the faintest show of true elegance, a single drawing-room comedy. Yet all this is but the anecdotal side of a great moneyed activity. The sovereignty of money is partly imposed on the playwright by the cost of the investment; is further imposed by the amount of box-office needed to keep the show alive; is finally imposed by the tactics, the pressures, the crises attending it all. There ensue all the legitimate differences of opinion and conflicts of interest, all the creative jitters and collaborating wrangling. And then, and far worse, the producer's itching palm may urge compromise; and then his whip hand decree it. The playwright, by now, has paid out so much in time and energy, in sleeplessness and exasperation, in controlling his temper and losing it, that creative satisfaction has vanished and the only reward is hard cash. The money, indeed, seems less a form of earnings than of damages.

In a quite different sense, the art world to-day seems too commercial and insidiously corrupting. To be sure, the art world has long contaminated people who worked in it in the precise sense that it refined them: it has provided a luxury life on rather a lackey basis. The luxury hand-out that is relatively new to the writers' world stretches back for centuries in the artists'. In every age the fashionable painter has been patronised and made a pet of by the rich, to inhabit a world of feasting and flattery. What, of course, makes the art world unique is the personal ownership of the artist's work. Composers, novelists, playwrights, poets, offer their work to the public. But pictures and sculpture belong to individuals and institutions. And those who *sell* pictures and sculpture are often akin to those who sell tiaras and Rolls-Royces; the art world, for all its cultivation, can have a voice quite as "full of money" as Scott Fitzgerald's Daisy Buchanan. It is a world that must not just allow for rich men's whims but that, like any courtier, must pander to them; and unobtrusively, like any guide or governess, correct their taste; and, like any interior decorator, minister to their pride of ownership and display.

The elegance of the art world's surroundings has tended to veil the frequent crassness of its motives. But the art world to-day is becoming more and more like the theatre world; to-day, too, there is less, almost, of the studio about it than of the stock exchange. And along with their Hollywood bidding and pricing, picture sales display a Hollywood garishness. Not only have the big auctions become plushier occasions than the grandest first nights; the sums involved make better "theatre." There is one sure way now in America to make what is artistic popular—the way of high finance. Thus dollars do make highbrows of us all: the sale-value of Gainsborough or Cézanne not only achieves headline prominence, it gains philistine respect. What decidedly helped give culture this new status was the $64,000 Question and all its TV siblings. The public saw culture and knowledge acquiring a big market value; and even after the quizzes were exposed as frauds, the taste they had fostered remained. The public is fascinated when millionaires—or museums—fight over pictures. Surely the museums must know that the gaudy prices they pay will set an unhealthful example. The doubtful wisdom of the Metropolitan paying over $2,000,000 for Rembrandt's *Aristotle Contemplating the Bust of Homer* seemed borne out by the crowds who flocked to see it. I watched them, and their "Ahs" were chiefly for the price and not the picture: they stood in vulgar awe as before a jeweller's window ablaze with huge diamonds. It was itself a spectacle of sorts, contemplating the public contemplating Aristotle contemplating Homer.

Without going into the artistic merits of Abstract Expressionism, surely the prices it has so quickly come to fetch make it clear that involved are not just art lovers of Pollock and De Kooning as they might be of Ruysdael and de Hooch, but stockholders in Pollock and De Kooning as they might be of Pan Am and United Carbide. "Works of art" have great commodity value, are top status symbols. As a result, everyone in the Big-Board art world is associated with the rich. And this touches those on the buying side as well as on the selling. Curators, like college presidents, are kept busy raising money and angling for bequests; and are to be found, oftener than college presidents, feeding at rich men's tables and imbibing the fumes of wealth.

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I HAVEN'T TRAVELLED this road of art-and-finance bell-bent on achieving a destination. In itself the road runs through picturesque country, offering much that is new and revealing along the way. But the sense grows on one that it has become a heavily travelled road, and one that does reach a destination. Sensibly starting off, away from the genteel slums and messy bohemias of writers in the past, it yet winds up in exclusive residential sub-divisions and a sort of conspicuous-wasteland.

The writer's position in all this may not be crucial; but his attitude *towards* his position, it would seem to me, is. Time out of mind, he has been fed high-sounding humbug, has heard that his slender means were not only a blessing, but a source of inspiration to boot. He has heard that what loftily set him apart from other men was his *not* striving for material success. Meanwhile, he whose great mission was to tell the truth had often, for a roof over his head, to curry favour. Well, all that has been exploded. My only wonder is whether, with the routing of the old familiar cant, a sort of reverse cant hasn't come to exist—a writer's cant, this time, in which he becomes his own victim. I have the sense that too often to-day *any* reservations about the artist's relation to money, any setting of limits to his concern for it, are thought arty, or outmoded, or just a new way to bilk him. I have a sense that it is to-day considered as much the artist's duty to regard himself as a businessman as it was formerly a businessman's dodge to segregate him as an artist.

This may be too glib an antithesis. But what strikes me as literal truth is that writers, as a whole, have been considerably more altered, and influenced, and infected by the life around them than they have themselves altered or influenced that life. And by writers I mean those with standards and values, those who would ruffle the shortcomings of society, not stroke them; who would protest, not comply. It strikes me that, though such writers don't feed pap to the public, they have begun to swallow the public's pap themselves, and that even as they attack America's materialism, in their own way they are succumbing to it. At any rate, it seems pertinent to determine how much of what they have become is mere surface accommodation to the life around them; how much is understandable adjustment to new forces and pressures; and how much, finally, seems a matter of choice and a subject for anxiety.

CERTAINLY MUCH TO-DAY in the writer's way of life reflects the helpful side of a highly mechanised society. Whatever his other problems, surely it grows harder—on even a modest income—to suffer all the discomforts of home. Dish-washers prevail; diaper services abound; so do laundromats, and community nursery schools, and sitters, and time-saving appliances, and small summer cottages to be had by the month. All these are distinct benefits, and seldom at odds with a writer's chosen way of life. However varied their backgrounds, most writers, having gone to college, have acquired a similarity of surface behaviour. Moreover, many writers to-day lecture and teach. Life, for most of them, grows what once might have been thought crushingly respectable. The party-going is more decorous, the domestic arrangements are more domestic. Writers' marriages may keep breaking up; but writers re-marry to-day rather than live in sin, and their homes contain somebody's children. The children often go to rather orthodox schools. It all constitutes a much modified bohemia, less the result, I think, of changed ideas than of changing incomes.

Much of this is a matter of surfaces. But if writers conform more, in the sense that they placard their roles less, that is because their roles to-day gain general respect, and because their economic positions and professional prestige as often soothe their vanity as assault it. Where fundamentals are concerned, most writers worth their salt still live and think on their own terms. Writers haven't had their mouths stopped; and society, perhaps more than ever, is having its nose punched. What seems to me a danger has less to do with middle-classness than with materialism. Still untouched by the old shibboleths, writers are not nearly so immune to the new status symbols. Indeed, the danger may well lie in the actual by-passing of the kind of middle-class standard of living towards which all professional people move—by-passing it for the high-income scale of living which many writers already maintain.

They may still be relatively few, but they bulk large enough to provide an incentive. Moreover, they don't live expensively, in the gambler-style way that artists once did from hitting the jackpot; they do so with every assumption of permanence. Hence certain new factors have entered in. To begin with, when one lives expensively one starts going with others who do, and something embarrassed or self-conscious arises towards writers less affluent. As for the

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others who live expensively, they can be of many kinds—blue-blooded country neighbours, or lion-hunters in town, or executives met on luxury liners. Mixing with them can be both instructive and enjoyable, but it can also foster dangerous identifications. The real danger is that the writer nowadays *can* often truly identify; and can, as seldom in the past, keep financially in step. Nowadays too, as seldom in the past, he may not be much out of step politically. There are few "dangerous radicals" in to-day's world of letters, while in its social world there are more and more liberals of a sort. A writer's morality may continue sound; but, rather than combat the world, it must often have to skirmish with his own way of life.

AN IRONICAL FACTOR in his new approach to living is quite literally the business of the wife and kiddies. It need not even mean a very conservative or conventional wife, she may just be feminine and elegant. At any rate, it is usually she who enforces a more affluent standard once it is reached. Seldom is any of this blueprinted, it just works out that way. But to live so high the respectable writer must often work too hard —the more so, from refusing to prostitute himself. Or, simply from being frequently approached, he will take on too many assignments. And half-smudged creative work born of being too much in demand can prove as harmful as hackwork born of being too little. What is dangerous is that each material temptation involves no artistic misconduct, no conscious backsliding. But, after ten years, just where will it leave him?

Not too badly off, perhaps. At the end of ten years, he will still not be stuffy, or Babbitty, or reactionary. He will still eat and drink, and get up and go to bed, exactly as he pleases. He will hate bores, and not be one. He will be unintimidated by fashions in architecture or art or letters; make his own discoveries, reach his own conclusions; speak up for what he believes in and vote for the better man.

The trouble is that all these virtues which still apply to him will apply equally to thousands of enlightened self-governing businessmen.

Variation on a Theme of R. Fuller

How does one know, in pornographic photographs,
That these engaged bodies are not married?
(Though there are those with more than two participants).
And so—as "moral" as we; as continually harried

By the sharp teeth of long proximity,
Worrying the life out of anxious breadwinners.
Notice how the girls are never smiling,
Whatever they are doing. They are not sinners

That sin and are happy, as our Puritan morality
Pictures the wicked in their simple Pleasure.
Rather they seem the compulsive actors
In some charade to charm our leisure,

Or in the repetitive punishments that Dante
Devised for those who violated the Code.
It is the necessity to earn a living
That is the prick, the rod, the lash, the goad.

Gavin Ewart

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Anthony Hartley

The British Bomb

What Deters Who, How and Why

In the final analysis it is uncertainty which forms the essential factor of deterrence.
GENERAL ANDRE BEAUFRE

There is an eternal dispute between those who imagine the world to suit their policy, and those who correct their policy to suit the realities of the world.... ALBERT SOREL

A GENERAL ELECTION, like a serious operation, has this disadvantage: that it is difficult to concentrate on anything else while waiting for it to take place. In Great Britain we have been in a pre-operative state of distraction for some months now, and are experiencing all the usual disinclination to apply ourselves to thorny problems. Moreover, as the great day approaches, more and more issues of national importance are wrenched out of their contexts, fitted into the Procrustean bed of party programmes and presented, duly lopped and trimmed, as the shining images of a Britain about to be born from the ballot box. Only, of course, it will not be like that. After the congratulations are over the successful party will find the problems facing it in much the same shape as before—awkward, recalcitrant, and unresponsive to elementary surgery.

No set of problems is more awkward in form or raises a wider range of political issues than that connected with defence. This is an area of policy that has already suffered from the confusion generated by the smokescreen (or rather barrage of tear-gas) laid down by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and, judging by recent controversy, it now seems that we are in for a period of really intense obfuscation with accusations of "chauvinism" or pre-electoral "lack of patriotism" distracting the elector from any rational evaluation of what is at stake.

Of course, if he is to believe all that he hears, his choice will be simple enough. The Conservatives will supply him with a picture of a Labour Party about to abandon for narrow party motives the independent British deterrent, a weapon which alone maintains our place in the world.[1] The Labour Party, in its turn, claims that this picture is as outmoded as the Tories themselves and offers, as a substitute status symbol, mobile conventional forces to be used, not for war (naturally!), but for "peace-keeping." What these alternatives have in common is flattery of the voter's ego and the expenditure of considerable sums of his money. Indeed, it is not the least curious feature of the form which the pre-electoral defence debate has taken that nobody has promised a reduction in expenditure on the armed forces—an offer which is a hardy annual of general elections.

Faced by a choice between these alternatives everyone will react to his own particular selection of emotive words. Both parties have chosen policies which can be presented in slogans appealing to their most faithful supporters. As with Pavlov's dogs, salivation is guaranteed, but a meal is less certain. Both of them, too, are the prisoners of their past history. Of course, the Conservatives could not abandon the British deterrent when to do so would be to repudiate Mr. Harold Macmillan's agreement at Nassau, not to mention Mr. Duncan Sandys' "new look" in defence. Of course, the Labour Party had to choose a policy which would reconcile

[1] "It would not be an abdication of defence, but of our role in the world." This remark of Mr. Thorneycroft's in the defence debate of February 26 is typical of the more apocalyptic variety of Tory utterance directed towards the voter.

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the factions which clashed so bitterly at Scarborough in 1960. As will become apparent, the American desire to see the end of "third-power" deterrents proved a godsend for Mr. Harold Wilson, enabling him to devise a compromise between right and left within his party which is likely to hold together until tested in action. It is to probe the fissures threatening this united front that the Conservatives have brought forward defence as an election issue, thereby also hoping to conceal their own rather uneasy posture as the possessors of an independent deterrent by courtesy of the government of the U.S.A., a paradox equally liable to exposure by time and events.

The British independent deterrent, therefore, is a subject around which it is to everyone's interest to create the maximum confusion. But it is also a subject with which the future of Britain and of the Atlantic alliance is closely connected, and attitudes adopted towards it will tend to express a far wider view of what course Britain is to take in the years to come than that usually implicit in the choice of a weapons system. The present nexus of policies, having as their focal point Britain's retention or abandonment of nuclear weapons, owes its complexity (*1*) to the evolution of those weapons themselves, (*2*) to a change in the strategic and diplomatic relationships within NATO, and (*3*) to the effect of these military and political considerations on the policies of the two major British parties. At the risk, therefore, of recounting once again facts which have already been extensively worked over by experts, it is necessary to examine each of these three interlocking areas of change, if an understanding is to be reached of the present position with regard to the British deterrent. That position is the result of the interaction of these three factors, and can only be understood if they are carefully analysed.

Technics & Dependence

PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE of the British independent deterrent dates from 1952.[2] Its existence was announced just before the first test of a British atom bomb on October 3rd of that year. There had been, of course, British work on the bomb during the war years, but the project had been transferred to the U.S.A. under an agreement reached between Mr. Churchill and President Roosevelt at Quebec in 1943. After the war, however, the passing of the U.S. atomic energy act of 1946 (the MacMahon Act) left Great Britain without its own nuclear weapons and with no right to the results of the research carried on on the basis of the Quebec agreement. Britain's position was succinctly defined by Mr. Churchill in 1955:

> Owing to the breakdown in the exchange of information between us and the United States since 1946, we have had to start again independently on our own. Fortunately, executive action was taken promptly by Mr. Attlee to reduce as far as possible the delay in our nuclear development and production. By his initiative we have made our own atomic bombs.

A Labour Prime Minister thus appears as the architect of the British deterrent, although a hydrogen bomb was only built and tested (at Christmas Island in May 1957) under the Conservatives.[3]

So far, so good. One can say about an atom bomb what Fats Waller said about rhythm: "When you've got it, you've got it...." The trouble was to come with the complication of means of delivery following on the development of ballistic missiles in the late 'fifties. As this was taking place, it became obvious that the life of the British striking-force of *Vulcan* and *Victor* bombers would be strictly limited, since they would become more and more vulnerable to improved Soviet anti-aircraft defences as time went on. That striking-force (of some 200 "*V*-bombers") still exists and is to be armed by the end of this year with the *Blue Steel* stand-

[2] A word about the sterile debate as to whether the British deterrent can be considered to be "independent" or not. Obviously a deterrent consisting of *Polaris* missiles purchased from America is not independent in the sense of being totally autonomous. On the other hand, once the purchase has been made, there is no technical reason why the weapons should not be used without reference to anyone. It would certainly not be beyond the power of British planners to aim them sufficiently near Soviet cities. Politically, of course, they could not so be used, and the devastating reprisals they would invite limit their possible use still further; but it must be remembered that the American and Russian deterrents are also subject to similar limitations, though to a lesser degree. The word "deterrent" is itself misleading in a decade when nuclear strategy has progressed beyond "massive retaliation."

[3] For the history of the British deterrent, see *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons* by Leonard Beaton and John Maddox (Chatto & Windus, 1962). One would hope that this essential book might go into a second edition to include the Nassau agreement and other more recent developments.

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off bomb; but clearly it will become progressively more difficult for it to penetrate Soviet defences, although it may well be that its obsolescence has been exaggerated for polemical motives. However, it was thought necessary to find something to replace the *V*-bomber force, and, in the late 'fifties, the British Government pinned its faith to the development of *Blue Streak*, an intermediate-range ballistic missile which was, however, liquid-fuelled (*i.e.*, of a type that was already being abandoned by the Americans). It was not, therefore, much of a surprise to informed opinion when, after Mr. Sandys, in the 1957 Defence White Paper, had put his shirt on nuclear weapons, the cancellation of the project was announced in 1960. Most experts would regard the decision to go for *Blue Streak* rather than for a *Polaris*-type submarine-based missile as a crucial mistake. However this may be, its disappearance as a weapon of war marked the end of the British attempt to manufacture a means of delivery and was widely assumed to have put an end to any really autonomous British nuclear force. (The point was emphasised during the recent defence debate by Mr. Aubrey Jones. For him the cancellation of *Blue Streak* brought to an end phase one of British nuclear weapons—"the nearest ... that this country got to full nuclear independence.")

Meanwhile a series of agreements between Great Britain and the U.S.A. had to some extent repaired the damage of the MacMahon Act and made provision for the imparting of information by the latter on the design of atomic weapons —a concession permitted by an amendment to the 1954 atomic energy act which was passed in 1958. In 1960, therefore, Mr. Macmillan was able to obtain from President Eisenhower a promise of the air-to-surface missile *Skybolt* then in process of development. Two years later the cancellation of the *Skybolt* programme by the Kennedy administration led to the Nassau agreement that Britain should buy *Polaris* missiles to be mounted on nuclear-powered submarines. The present situation is that four submarines armed with *Polaris* are intended to be in service by 1970. The *V*-bombers are to have their lives extended both by being armed with *Blue Steel* and by adaptation for low-level flying under opposing radar screens. The new supersonic, low-level flying aircraft *TSR 2* is also to be equipped with nuclear weapons and used for strategic as well as tactical missions.

THROUGHOUT THE EIGHTEEN YEARS during which the British deterrent has been created and maintained it does not seem that the governments in power, whether Labour or Conservative, ever seriously questioned the necessity of possessing such weapons. Immediately after the war the attitude seems to have been that it was quite natural for Britain to arm its forces with the most powerful weapons going, and the uncertainty of the American commitment to Europe in the immediate post-war period must have given urgency to the Labour Government's decision to build a British bomb.[4] This was, indeed, the reason given by Mr. Attlee as late as March, 1952, when he said:

> I do not believe it is right that this country should be absolutely dependent on the United States of America. That is one very good reason for going ahead with our own work on the atomic bomb.

By 1957 the comparative cheapness of nuclear deterrence as compared with conventional weapons had been appreciated and helped to produce the Sandys "new look" defence policy which, however, soon had to be followed by a series of agonising reappraisals as it became apparent that the expense and the time required for the development of delivery systems for nuclear weapons made it very hard to correct a wrong decision. From the choice of *Blue Streak* to the *Polaris* deal at Nassau the British Government's actions have something of the inevitability of those of a man faced with an increasingly diminished number of alternatives. From the moment that *Blue Streak* (itself based on American knowledge) was abandoned for the U.S.-developed and -manufactured *Skybolt*, the way was open for a British government to be helplessly embarrassed by a rationalisation of American weapons policy of the kind that took place before Nassau. As Mr. Aubrey Jones put it recently in the House of Commons:

> When I consider that our last three weapons projects—*Blue Streak*, *Skybolt*, and the *Polaris* submarine—have all been derived from the United States, I do not believe it practicable,

[4] "It should be noted that in the post-war period the British armed forces built their own equipment over a very wide field, equalled only by the Soviet Union and the United States. . . . The national weapons base was, and still largely is, that of a great power; and in this context a decision not to proceed with nuclear weapons would have been surprising in the post-war period." (Beaton and Maddox.)

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technologically or economically, to go back to full-blooded nuclear independence.

The history of British nuclear weapons is one of a growing technological dependence on the U.S.A. which, at Nassau, was accompanied on the political level by the plan then announced for a NATO multinational force, to which part of the British *V*-bombers would be assigned. This plan (like the later American project of a mixed-manned NATO multilateral force) was essentially an attempt to find a solution for the problems posed by the distribution of nuclear power within the Atlantic alliance. Great Britain had begun to be technologically dependent on the U.S.A. for its nuclear deterrent just at the time when the wider dependence on America of its European allies was creating a serious crisis within NATO.

Allies & Rivals

TWO DEVELOPMENTS in the late 'fifties changed the relationship of the U.S.A. to its European allies in NATO. The first was the fact that, after the launching of the first Soviet *sputnik* in the autumn of 1957, America for the first time in its history appeared directly threatened with devastation in the event of war. Up to then, even after American nuclear preponderance had been lost with the development of Soviet atomic and hydrogen bombs, it had been thought that it was beyond the power of the Soviet Union to deliver those bombs on the American continent except by one-way suicide flights which stood a good chance of not getting through. After 1957 it was clear that, if the U.S.A. used its own deterrent capacity to come to the aid of its European allies or to repel incursions on to their territory, then Russian reprisals could strike directly at America itself, probably—to judge by Soviet military doctrine—at American cities rather than military installations. The reversal was a striking one, all the more so in that it coincided with much talk in Washington of the "missile gap," so that for a time European public opinion had the impression that Russia might actually be going to become superior to the U.S.A. in nuclear striking capacity. This was not, in fact, so, but the scare helped to draw the attention of Europeans to the drastic change in the strategic situation and a potential diminution of their own security under the American nuclear "shield."

Meanwhile, with the advent of the Kennedy administration, American nuclear strategists began to put into operation their reply to the new position: what is called the "McNamara doctrine" or, sometimes, "counter-force strategy." This has been written about in great detail, but can be summed up as follows:

1. The creation of an invulnerable "second strike" capacity—*i.e.* nuclear weapons of retaliation which would survive a surprise nuclear strike against them. This objective was to be achieved by the "hardening" of land bases containing the ICBM *Minuteman* and the building of nuclear-powered submarines to carry the IRBM *Polaris*.

2. "Graduated deterrence": measures designed to prevent the waging of full-scale nuclear war to counter a local Russian aggression with conventional arms. The ideal is to meet every type of attack on its own level, so that "escalation" into a thermo-nuclear exchange is prevented. These measures include the "hot" line from Moscow to Washington, U.S. attempts to get their allies in NATO to increase their conventional forces, and the withdrawal of vulnerable medium-range missiles such as *Thor* and *Jupiter* from Britain, Italy, and Turkey in the Spring of 1963—a change in policy intended to remove the provocation of weapons that could only be used for a "first strike" and might, therefore, call down a Soviet "pre-emptive" attack.

The development of "counter-force" strategy, in which the nuclear strike would be at the enemy's rocket-bases rather than at his cities. This involves the very difficult and sophisticated concept of the enforcement of a self-denying ordinance on both sides even in the midst of a full-scale nuclear exchange. From this there follows the importance of waging nuclear war with unified control of the striking forces on each side, since, as Mr. Dean Acheson put it, "a scattered sputtering of feeble shots to begin with spells doom for everyone."

The McNamara doctrine and, indeed, the reasoning of American strategists in general, have usually been misunderstood (or simply remained unread) in Europe.[5] The external signs

[5] When someone as well-informed as General Pierre Gallois can write: "One must recognise that the majority of young intellectuals who surround President Kennedy have not kept secret their grand design: a world in which the two 'great powers' would be forced to co-exist in peace and respect their mutual security, while the territories of other nations could be disputed by conventional forms of war and their futures decided by the outcome of such wars without mortal risk to the two 'great powers' . . ." (*Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, October, 1963)—it is not surprising that the authors of *Dr. Strangelove* should display their ignorance. All the same, it is a little shocking that the sense of responsibility and care for the future of mankind that have recently presided over American thinking about nuclear strategy and tactics should not be appreciated in Europe.

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of the McNamara doctrine (the withdrawal of IRBMs from Europe, the demand that Europeans should increase their conventional forces in NATO, the endeavour to avoid the use even of tactical nuclear weapons by their withdrawal from front-line positions) did, indeed, show an alarming similarity to the preliminary steps of a retreat to *Festung Amerika*, even of an agreement with the U.S.S.R. at the expense of European interests. But it seems doubtful whether this American attempt at adaptation to the realities of a new strategic phase would have produced quite the reaction it did in Europe, had it not been for another long-term political trend which made itself felt at the end of the decade.

FOR FIFTEEN YEARS, from 1945 onwards, the recovery of Western Europe from the disasters of the war had been under way, greatly and indispensably assisted by Marshall Aid. By 1960 this process was conveniently symbolised both in the success of the European communities and in the prosperity and political stability achieved by France under the rule of President de Gaulle. At the same time, inevitably, there grew up a feeling that Europe should now have a voice in the direction of the Atlantic alliance more in keeping with its own newly-recovered self-confidence than the hurried visits of Prime Ministers to Washington at moments of international crisis that had punctuated the 'fifties. Everything in President de Gaulle's intellectual formation and emotional prejudices pre-destined him to become the representative of such a feeling. "The General," writes Professor Stanley Hoffmann, "seems to be guided, or haunted, by memories of the war years, when the fate of Europe was settled without the Europeans and sometimes, as the fate of Eastern Europe shows, against the Europeans."[6] And he goes on:

> In particular, anyone who has followed the learned American discussions of arms control, based on the hypothesis of a convergence of vital interests between the Russians and the Americans, cannot prevent himself from recognising in them a kind of appeal to a "duopoly," an invitation to the Russians to understand that mastery of armaments is only possible if the two superpowers prevent third powers from reaching this "rank."

There, indeed, was the rub. American diplomacy during the first years of the Kennedy administration was extraordinarily insensitive to the conclusions which Europeans might possibly draw from the new U.S. strategic doctrines. Professor Kissinger has made the appropriate point:

> Perhaps the basic difficulty has been that we have treated what is essentially a political and psychological problem as if it were primarily technical. Thus the speeches of Secretary McNamara at successive NATO meetings have been generally hailed as extraordinarily brilliant, yet they have almost always been followed by periods of intense restiveness in Europe. (*Foreign Affairs*, January, 1963.)

In these circumstances the creation of the French *force de frappe* could appeal to some Europeans (almost certainly to the majority of Frenchmen) as providing Western Europe with a guarantee against a new Munich or a new Yalta. (Professor Hoffmann goes so far as to say that the threat of French nuclear action against the Soviet Union would force America to intervene on France's side to save it from being crushed. As a policy this would seem to boil down to President de Gaulle's reply to the Soviet Ambassador, M. Vinogradov: *"Eh bien, M. l'ambassadeur, nous mourrons ensemble...."*)

As regards the composition of the *force de frappe*, its first generation is to consist of fifty *Mirage IV*s with a range of about 4,800 km—a figure which would be diminished by 30% by low-level flying, their most likely method of operation. Their effectiveness has been under fire recently, both from Raymond Aron and the Club Jean Moulin on account of shortness of range (as a maximum they could reach Moscow) and vulnerability (even a low-level strike could be countered by Soviet missiles of the type of *SAM III*). The second generation will consist of submarines carrying missiles of the *Polaris* type, but these will only begin to come into service in 1969. Until then, and despite a proposed surface-to-surface IRBM to plug the gap between the two systems, the credibility of the French deterrent will be low. The difference between Britain and France in this respect is considerable, since the former not only has a

[6] *Esprit*, June, 1963. Stanley Hoffmann enjoys the distinction, surprising in an American professor, of being the best apologist for Gaullist foreign policy. But I find the equation: Europe = France a little too simple. Europe is an instrument, not an end, in President de Gaulle's mind. Professor Hoffmann is nearer the truth when he writes: "It is through Europe that France can still pretend to a certain grandeur." Gaullism is, in fact, the Old Man of the Sea of the European idea.

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ten years' lead in experience of nuclear weapons, but has the knowledge stemming from a nuclear relationship with the U.S.A. that really deserves the adjective "special." At the moment it can be said that Britain, for better or for worse, actually has a deterrent, whereas France merely has the idea of one. Perhaps the most ironic comment on this is the immensely greater diplomatic use to which President de Gaulle has been able to put his almost non-existent weapons.

There is, indeed, a sense in which the announced intention of developing nuclear weapons seems to be *almost* as effective a diplomatic bargaining point as their actual possession. It is not so much what President de Gaulle might do with the few *Mirages* he has got that worries the U.S. government, as the attraction his example might exert on the German Federal Republic. And this fear is all the more acute in that, as Miss Coral Bell has recently pointed out (in her excellent essay on Anglo-American relations, *The Debatable Alliance*), the coming to power in France of President de Gaulle coincided with the raising of the Berlin issue by Mr. Khrushchev in November, 1958—a crisis which both produced a divergence between the U.S.A. and West Germany and supplied the latter with an apparently staunch supporter in France. The German government, it is true, renounced the manufacture of nuclear weapons by a solemn declaration in 1955; but there is nothing here to prevent collaboration with France in the production of weapons systems. If this were to happen, the European end of the Atlantic alliance would be well out of the control of the U.S. government, and, given the view taken of the West German nuclear arms in Moscow, a sharp deterioration of the international situation could be expected. A combination of these factors might lead an American administration to think that it would be better off out of Europe. How imminent is this danger? No doubt, it will always be present as a diplomatic alternative to strengthen Bonn's hand in dealings with its allies, nor are voices wanting in Germany to favour such a policy; but it is hard to imagine a responsible German government ever setting in train reactions that might lead to an American withdrawal from Europe except as a result of a mortal crisis in the Atlantic alliance.[7] But there will always be fear, both in London and Washington, that this eventuality may arise, and Germany will remain the principal European battle-ground disputed between Gaullist and Atlantic forces with the French *force de frappe* alluringly offered as a pep pill for German nationalism. This situation, where President de Gaulle can put temptation in the way of Germans feared to be in little need of it to develop their own vices, is the main reason why "Gaullism," greeted with amused incredulity some years ago, is now regarded with trepidation.

Behind the curious gyrations of British political parties around the problem of the British deterrent, terror of what might happen if the Germans got hold of nuclear weapons—and the Russians began to take fright—is a powerful motive force. The "*n*th-country" problem in Great Britain means first of all "the German problem," and the apprehension aroused in all parties by the activities of President de Gaulle reposes on the feeling that his appeal is to a fiery brand of traditional nationalism, all too familiar and, in any case, better kept away from the buttons of delivery systems. These fears have played a considerable part in the British debate on the deterrent which has culminated in the new defence policy of the Labour Party.

THE ELABORATION of a new American strategy and the rise of Gaullism, reacting upon one another, have brought about a curious turning of the tables in the positions of the two main British political parties. When the existence of the British deterrent was first announced to the general public, it had the approval of both of them, and it was only after 1957, with the rise of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, that a strong section of the Labour Party began to attack it. CND's most obvious device was "BAN THE BOMB," but its aims were much wider than that conveniently emotive blanket-slogan might have suggested: it also stood for a reversal of British foreign policy, withdrawal from NATO, getting rid of American bases, for neutralism combined with pacifism in varying proportions. It was this end—and not simply the abandon-

[7] The "Generals memorandum" published by the German defence ministry in the summer of 1960 demanded that Germany should have the same arms as its allies, but this was in the context of whether or not the *Bundeswehr* should have "tactical nuclear weapons." However, the argument could be extended. Since then, Herr Franz-Josef Strauss, the former Defence Minister, seems to have joined forces with the right-wing of the C.D.U. to advocate closer collaboration with France. How far he really believes in this is another matter. It may well be a manoeuvre designed primarily to embarrass Chancellor Erhard and Dr. Schroeder.

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ment of the British deterrent—which Hugh Gaitskell and his followers fought at Scarborough in 1960.

Looking back at CND, it is fairly easy to perceive the muddle and blurring of issues which its emergence brought into the debate on British defence. For, whatever its opponents might think about the national deterrent in isolation, the fact that its abandonment had become the most prominent symbol of a far more radical policy meant that they were in practice forced into defending the keeping of it, while the subtler issues raised by the existence of nuclear weapons were neither noticed nor discussed. The result is a lack in this country of the kind of rational thinking about nuclear strategy which exists so plentifully in the U.S.A. For the anti-unilateralist wing of the Labour Party this meant being pushed into the adoption of attitudes with respect to the British deterrent which were not necessarily their own. The Labour Party was split to the advantage of the Conservatives, and Gaitskell and his supporters reduced to fighting off the unilateralist attack without too much concern for appearing to present a different stance from that of their official opponents. At this time defence debates found Labour divided against itself and with no practical policy of its own.[8]

The McNamara doctrine and the rise of Gaullism offered the Labour Party a chance of emerging from the doldrums and of developing a united policy in accordance with its traditional instincts. Since American strategy and loyalty to the Atlantic alliance appeared to require the merging of the British deterrent in NATO and, ultimately, its abandonment with a concentration on building up conventional forces, pro-NATO Labour members could join with unilateralists in "giving up the bomb" with a clear conscience. And this was an even more attractive line in that it seemed to offer some hope of "influencing Europe by our example." Perhaps the French and the Germans (especially the Germans) would not wish to have nuclear weapons when they saw that Britain had discarded them. The Labour Party—the whole Labour Party—devoutly hoped so. And, at the same time, the changes in American strategic thinking that had opened the way towards Labour unity on defence made things more difficult for the Conservatives, torn between Atlantic loyalties and a nationalistic desire to paddle their own nuclear canoe. This dilemma they have resolved by speaking with several voices:

> In Paris, in the councils of NATO, they are the firmest partisans of collective action and integration. In London and before the House of Commons they employ several of the favourite arguments of General de Gaulle and the Gaullists.[9]

This contradiction in the defence policy of the present British Government has not been eliminated and is particularly evident in the haverings and hesitations over British participation in the mixed-manned MLF, despite the obvious political advantages of such a step, given the Conservative Government's expressed desire to keep "close to Europe."

The Labour Party, on the contrary, has been able to present a defence policy that manages the tour de force of keeping the left wing of the party quiet and, at the same time, appearing more in line with Atlantic thinking than that of the Conservatives.[10] *That policy can be summarised as follows:*

1. *The re-negotiation of the Nassau agreement. The V-bomber force would be assigned to NATO and the plan to acquire Polaris abandoned if it were found to add nothing to the alliance. The nuclear submarines would still be built as "hunter-killers." The plan to give the TSR2 a nuclear capacity would be abandoned.*
2. *The mixed-manned MLF is thought to be of doubtful military value, but there might be British participation in it, if this seemed the only way of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons—especially to Germany.*

[8] CND's was, of course, not a practical policy in that sense. Here is what a by no means unsympathetic observer had to say about it in 1959: "This policy, in its crudest form, advocates that we should invite UNO to supervise the destruction of our nuclear arms, and perhaps of the others too, and of our arms industry, and the expulsion of the American bases, should denounce the North Atlantic Treaty, and should put ourselves in close diplomatic contact with the governments of India, Yugoslavia, and Ghana.... Its adoption... is so unlikely that it would be frivolous to spend time examining its merits and demerits." (*Strategy for Survival*, by Wayland Young, p. 52.)

[9] *Le Grand Débat. Initiation à la Stratégie atomique.* By Raymond Aron (Paris, 1963), p. 102.

[10] *Cf.* Mr. George Brown in the House of Commons on February 27th, claiming that "the maintenance of more than one nuclear centre of power in the alliance with each retaining independence of action must destroy the alliance in the end and defeat any idea of interdependence." Of course, one could (and President de Gaulle does) claim exactly the opposite, but that does not alter the fact that Mr. Brown is on a good wicket.

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3. British commitments overseas require strong mobile forces outside Europe which could fulfil our obligation to Commonwealth countries and, in case of need, be used as peace-keeping forces under the auspices of the UN.
4. The British forces must be armed with better and more numerous conventional weapons, though it is not thought that conscription will be needed to bring them up to strength.

No doubt, this programme contains the usual amount of double-think. The *V*-bombers would be no less under the control of a British Labour government after being "assigned" to NATO than they are now, so Britain's nuclear capacity would last up to 1968 or 1969. The Commonwealth, the UN, peace-keeping—all these are "OK" words in current semantics, but the idea of a British fire-brigade proceeding round the world extinguishing conflagrations on the model of recent events in East Africa seems more calculated to appeal to the national *amour propre* than to political realism. The logic of the weapons programme is also somewhat damaged by an evident determination not to cancel any order for arms manufactured in Great Britain. Yet, militarily speaking, the Labour Party has produced (perhaps for the first time in its history) a feasible defence structure which can provide a British contribution to the Atlantic alliance as well as meet other U.K. commitments overseas.

THE DEEPER CONTRADICTIONS of Labour defence policy are to be found more in its political background than in its purely military aspects. One such contradiction, inherent in its very nature as a compromise between opposing factions of the party, is liable to be felt when it comes to settling just what the relationship between Britain and America is to be. A defence policy that envisages placing all the nuclear power of the Atlantic alliance in American hands should have as its corollary a foreign policy more closely aligned with that of the U.S.A. If the concentration of nuclear power in the control of one country has any political effect at all, it is reasonable to suppose that it would give that one country more influence over its partners. Is this what the left wing of the Labour Party want? In Vietnam or in Latin America they would presumably wish to "stand up to the U.S.A.," but the logic of their defence policy will be against them. It was, after all, Aneurin Bevan who disliked the idea of going "naked into the conference chamber."

Moreover, the Labour Party, in producing a defence policy tailored to suit its own needs, seems frequently to have based the advantages to be expected from that policy on unwarrantable assumptions about other countries' behaviour. As I have already suggested, one powerful Labour motive for the abandonment of the British independent deterrent is the hope that Germany may be induced to drop any nuclear pretensions it may have and, above all, to reject the temptations offered by President de Gaulle. The prevailing Labour belief has recently been expressed by Mr. Gerry Reynolds:

> Our insistence on the ownership of nuclear weapons and adequate delivery systems is bound to lead to other Western European countries, especially France and Germany, taking the same view. (*Spectator*, February 21)

But this statement is confused, and the conclusions drawn from it more than doubtful. It is not because Britain has a deterrent that President de Gaulle wants one. He is interested primarily in supplying a European counterweight to the U.S.A. within NATO, and British abandonment of *Polaris* will not make one iota of difference to his actions. As for the Germans, the opinion of them implicit in Labour Party policy is highly paradoxical. On the one hand, they are thought to be so potentially *dangerous* as not to be trusted even with tactical atomic weapons. On the other, they are deemed so *sentimental* that a British nuclear self-denying ordinance will lead them to join in. But those people in Germany who want their country to have these weapons or to join in nuclear collaboration with France are not primarily interested in becoming equal to Great Britain (though equality within the alliance can serve them as an argument). They are interested in such weapons because they think that their possession will increase Germany's security *vis-à-vis* the U.S.S.R. and give them more control over their national future. One may think them wrong, but their opinion is presumably a serious one and not likely to be changed by a British renunciation.

THE ONE METHOD of strengthening German sentiments against such demands for nuclear weapons would be help in the creation of a NATO nuclear striking-force with the ensuing satisfaction to the German national ego. That is the importance of the mixed-manned MLF. It is, in effect, an offer to work in collaboration with other countries in a common organisation

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where Germans will not be placed in a position of inferiority because they are Germans—and where they can be initiated into the handling of nuclear strategic weapons, thereby coming to realise more of the complexities and dangers which the existence of these arms implies. The MLF may be a none too credible military conception, and may be a weak enough instrument for weaning the Germans away from a form of Gaullism; but it is the only political lever at the West's disposal for that purpose, and it is strange that the Labour Party, which takes the German threat so to heart, should be prepared to brush the idea off with a few jokes from Mr. Denis Healey. In fact, of course (as Mr. Wilson seems to realise), Washington and Bonn can force any British government to join the MLF simply by going ahead. Britain could hardly afford the isolation of staying out of such a project. In this connection it is also none too easy to see what the Labour Party means by saying that it would "re-negotiate" the Nassau agreement.[11] This would appear to suggest—particularly in the form put forward by Mr. Brown during the defence debate—that greater control of NATO nuclear capacity by America's allies would be part of the price for Britain's abandonment of its deterrent, though it is hard to see why the American Government should be willing to pay any price at all to ensure the execution of a policy which Mr. Wilson has announced that he is going to carry out anyway. Either the Labour Party intends to reject *Polaris* on its arrival in power, in which case the gesture has no bargaining value *vis-à-vis* the Americans or anyone else. Or else it regards the future of the *Polaris* striking-force as a subject for bargaining, in which case its present announcement of intentions is merely a smokescreen designed to maintain party unity. This dilemma is deeply entrenched in the nature of the Labour Party's compromise on defence.

THESE DIFFICULTIES are scarcely less striking than the misunderstanding as to the purpose of the British deterrent which exists in the Conservative Party. No doubt, if British Conservatives were logical, they would produce their own Tory version of Gaullism, and it is clear that Atlantic orthodoxy sits uneasily upon the shoulders of at least some ministers. Fortunately, logic has never exactly been their long suit, and the result has been an ambivalent attitude, satisfactory enough for internal consumption, but liable to infuriate Washington and to confirm Paris in its *idée-fixe* about British hypocrisy. Over the last decade the policy of the Government has shifted back and forth from "independence" to "interdependence" without reaping the rewards which might have been expected from either attitude. Certainly, the history of British foreign policy since 1952 does not appear as a shining advertisement for the advantages conferred by the deterrent on its possessor. A nuclear striking force was no use to us in Malaya, at Suez, in East Africa or North Borneo. Their existence did not ensure us a voice in the conduct of the Cuban crisis or help us to get a European free trade area. But it is difficult not to think that this apparent uselessness of our nuclear advantages may have been due, less to a quality inherent in national deterrents, than to a certain irresolution of purpose in those who controlled foreign policy. The Common Market negotiations, for instance, do seem to have been the one notable example of an occasion on which the possession of nuclear capacity might have gained Britain a political advantage. But the limitations on even the political use of the British deterrent are shown by the fact that the Government was neither willing nor able to go ahead with a deal with President de Gaulle without American consent.[12] Obviously, an independent nuclear capacity is only of use, politically speaking, if a government is willing to make the most of it and is not too worried

[11] In the speech quoted above Mr. George Brown said: "We will re-open negotiations with the ally with whom the agreement was made and that, in turn, forms a part of our negotiations with the other partners in the alliance. That will have to be done in the light of the situation as it then exists." Later he went on: "We want some real and genuine partnership in the alliance through better political institutions—institutions that do not now exist—for that would meet a great deal of the criticism of the others in the alliance about the absence of sharing. . . . We must aim for provision by one along with effective sharing among the others."

[12] Such a deal would presumably have taken the form of the supplying of enriched uranium to France, thus saving the very expensive constructions at Pierrelatte, as well as the pooling of knowledge, in which Britain is very many years ahead of France. The British Government did apparently make a tentative approach to Washington during the summer of 1962 for permission to pool British nuclear knowledge (some of which had been imparted by the U.S.A.) in an Anglo-French deterrent. Consent was not given, and the British Government—perhaps rightly—seems never even to have considered proceeding without at least tacit American approval.

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about the feelings of allies or "rocking the boat." It is certainly the case that President de Gaulle's possession of a deterrent makes more sense in terms of his desire to exert pressure on (and to build up a counterweight to) the U.S.A. than does the British bomb in terms of our chosen role as America's most loyal (if most candid) friend. The policy of the Conservative Government with regard to the deterrent and its exploitation in terms of power has always given an impression of being "willing to wound, but yet afraid to strike." In these circumstances it is not surprising that it has gained little advantage from its nuclear weapons.

Safety & Subtlety

THE DEBATE on the deterrent carried on by the two major British political parties is, therefore, in some danger of being rendered sterile by the contradictions in their own attitudes. But, if their policies show flaws and illogicalities, as is probably inevitable, then it only becomes more important to present the issues in other than party terms. The British independent deterrent can be considered under two aspects: as a purely military phenomenon and a political one. These can be taken in turn, although the second in some sense includes the first. Broadly speaking, the deterrent is a military factor if war breaks out, and a political factor if it does not.

As an effective military arm it is clear that the British independent deterrent suffers from serious disadvantages, and that much of the criticism of its credibility is highly plausible. Even though *Polaris*-carrying submarines seem at present to offer an invulnerable means of delivery, nobody can tell what the situation will be in 1970 when our own nuclear submarines come into service. Moreover, though it is true that nuclear weapons are relatively cheap in proportion to their power (the *Polaris* submarine force will only cost 4 per cent of the annual defence budget during the years it is being developed), it is obvious that the complexity (and therefore the cost) of weapons systems is likely to grow. For Great Britain to maintain a credible deterrent beyond the lifetime of *Polaris* and into a decade that may see the development of the anti-missile missile would require increased expenditure on research, development, or the simple purchase of weapons from the U.S.A. In ten years' time it may well be that individual nations, even of the industrialised type of Western Europe, will be unable to keep up at all against the true great powers—in other words, their deterrence will only be effective against one another or extra-European "third" countries. The anti-missile missile may well restore the gap between the great power and the medium power which the "balance of terror" had lessened. Implicit in the Gaullist desire to involve Germany in nuclear collaboration is the need to share the costs of such an operation over a large economic area—while retaining much of the control in French hands. The alternative to a single-centred system of deterrence within the Atlantic alliance will, in the future, not be the national deterrent, but, rather, to use the phrase of the military correspondent of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, Major Adelbert Weinstein, "a second Western centre of deterrence."

In a military sense, too, the arguments behind the McNamara belief that it is essential for the Atlantic alliance to have a completely unitary nuclear command are impressive. These arguments are, however, capable of being reversed. No doubt, it is necessary for American counter-force strategy not to have allies loosing off at targets on their own, but might it not be equally necessary for those allies to be able to influence the nature of the targets attacked?[13] For instance, since counter-force strategy actually brings nearer the prospect of a nuclear exchange between America and Russia (by making it less "unthinkable"), a situation might arise in which Soviet strikes against American bases in Britain would destroy nearby cities without being met by a counter-city strike on America's part. In that case would it not be to Britain's advantage to be able to make its own nuclear intervention, and that this possibility should be known to the Soviet Union beforehand? A similar imbalance arises out of the concept of "escalation" (*i.e.*, a war started with conventional weapons and developing into a full-scale nuclear war—presumably via the use of tactical atomic weapons). Many of the measures taken by the Kennedy administration were designed to reduce the danger of "escalation," and yet, for a European country in immediate proximity to the Soviet Union, it is exactly the danger of

[13] Mr. Leonard Beaton has pointed out the importance to this country of the selection of targets in any war in which counter-force strategy was used on both sides: "The ability to deter the choice by the Russians of certain specific targets during a major nuclear conflict could wholly alter the destruction which was done in Britain. . . ." (*The Guardian*, February 6, 1963.)

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escalation which forms the most effective deterrent to local Soviet aggression with conventional forces. There is certainly a case for arguing that the possession by Britain or France of nuclear weapons increases the element of uncertainty which General Beaufre has recently described as "the essential factor of deterrence."[14] It was, indeed, considerations of this type which seem to have been the military reasons behind Britain's nuclear striking force, since the advantage of being able to select one's own targets in case of war was specifically mentioned by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Macmillan (then Minister of Defence) in 1955. American "graduated deterrence" is almost certainly considered by President de Gaulle as a device for saving most of the world at the expense of a small portion of it —a small portion which, in his eyes, would almost inevitably be Western Europe.[15]

A CASE CAN, THEREFORE, be made in military terms for hanging on to the British deterrent as long as it is technologically feasible to do so —at any rate for another decade. (It is always difficult to base an argument on what may or may not be possible in ten years' time. One does not know what technical developments there may be nor, indeed, what hidden portions of the iceberg of weapons development are already preoccupying defence ministries.) Yet one does not need to believe that all Gaullist fears are totally ridiculous to think that this particular dilemma could have been solved far more easily if Britain and America were the only two powers concerned. For all America's dislike of *n*th-power nuclear weapons there has never really been much objection in Washington to the British nuclear striking-force. It is a significant fact that arrangements for the exchange of information on the design of nuclear weapons were made even after Suez had shaken mutual confidence. Despite all the skirmishing around the phrase recently, there is a "special relationship" between Britain and America which reposes on the fact that the Americans have far more confidence in the desire of the British to keep in step with their policies than they have in that of any other country. And this trust is reciprocal. British informed opinion has confidence in American intentions in a way that is certainly not true of the continental allies. The loud manifestations of anti-Americanism among some ideologists tend to obscure the fact that it would be very difficult for a British Government to set itself against America in any significant way. With British nuclear weapons, in fact, the *n*th-power problem did not really exist. The *V*-bomber force was available to NATO, though still under the control of the British Government, and other eventualities were left vague. In fact, it seems very nearly impossible to devise a system by which a national force with control of its own weapons shall be removed from the command of its own government, and talk of "assignment" of *V*-bombers, therefore, leaves the options open.

THE DETERMINATION OF the French to make their own nuclear weapons changed the shape of the problem. At Nassau Britain ostentatiously surrendered its "special relationship" and undertook the role of bell-wether to lead France into a nuclear comity (still, incidentally, a position of confidence as regards American policy). The bait failed to work (as anyone who had studied the character of President de Gaulle might have expected that it would fail to work), and it became obvious that a fluid period had set in when the distribution of nuclear power within the Atlantic alliance would be a major issue. In these changed circumstances it would seem that there is not much of a brief for a precipitate "phasing-out" of the deterrent by Great Britain.

For, while there is certainly a very good case for Britain putting its trust in American command during a war crisis, the present diplomatic situation within NATO now looks sufficiently threatening for unilateral gestures to be out of place. In four or five years' time one can imagine a situation where France has a deterrent of sorts, where Britain has given up *Polaris* and is coming to the end of the credibility of its *V*-bomber force, where the MLF has broken down, and Germany is being attracted by French offers of collaboration. This international conjuncture is not a fantastic one; it would simply mean that Gaullist diplomacy had

[14] *Introduction à la Stratégie* (Paris, 1963).

[15] These military arguments look even stronger if the latest theories concerning the Soviet military stance are taken into consideration. Originally, Russian military theorists had taken the view that any war would produce nuclear blows against population centres as well as against military objectives. Now, however, the structure of Soviet military power and the view taken of "counter-force" strategy (*i.e.*, that it is essentially a first-strike strategy) suggest that the Russian version of graduated deterrence may involve the use of the large Soviet concentration of IRBM's against Western Europe as an intermediate stage of escalation.

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reached some of its objectives. At that point the U.S.A. would presumably have to carry out some sort of general negotiation about the structure of NATO—a negotiation in which British interests would rank very much below those of France and Germany, since the whole object of the operation would be to cope with the nuclear forces of the one and the nuclear potential of the other. The desire not to place ourselves in an inferior position internationally to a Gaullist France is a much stronger reason for wishing to keep a British deterrent in existence than any seat at the nuclear test-ban talks, flattering though this may be to Foreign Secretaries.[16]

There is, therefore, a strong argument for keeping our deterrent in existence until the present situation within NATO can be cleared up. Mr. Alastair Buchan has recently argued that, since Britain is likely in a few years' time to be faced by a European Community that has accepted "the de Gaulle-Thorneycroft argument, namely, that European security requires a nuclear force under European control," we should therefore avoid the possibility of having to make an agonising choice between our Atlantic and our European interests by "pioneering a new command arrangement within the West." But, while everyone would like to see a "new command arrangement within the West," the pioneering of one is unlikely to have much effect on President de Gaulle, and that leaves the problem where it was. Moreover, if a situation is going to exist in which agonising choices have to be made between Atlantic and European interests (and Mr. Buchan does not hold out much hope that a Gaullist European force will not come into being), then it is going against a major principle of political life to surrender one's freedom of action in advance—even to save oneself from the temptation of later making a wrong choice.

MY OWN conclusion, then, is that it is likely to be possible militarily, and appears to be necessary politically, to keep the British independent nuclear deterrent in a state of credibility while the new structure of the Atlantic alliance and the relationship of the Europe of the Six both to Britain and America are being worked out. In the solutions found to these problems the distribution of nuclear power will certainly play a major part, but what the solutions will be will depend on unpredictable trends in public opinion and political life in the countries concerned—not to mention such uncertainties as the development of East-West relations or the Sino-Soviet conflict.

Broadly speaking, solutions fall into two classes: Atlantic integration and the "bi-polar" formula of a European nuclear force. No doubt, the first of these would be more welcome to Anglo-American opinion, but, unless the U.S.A. is willing to accept some surrender of sovereignty on its own part, it will probably have to settle for the latter which would at least have the merit of hastening the creation of European political institutions and luring the "Europeans" away from President de Gaulle. For the moment such devices as the mixed-manned MLF deserve support, even though one might be sceptical as to their ultimate appeal compared with the heady brew of Gaullism. We all want Mr. George Brown's "real and genuine partnership in the alliance through better political institutions." The difficulty is to get it.

In the light of this conclusion, the policies of the two major parties are a good deal nearer to each other than might be gathered from the way they are expressed. From the Conservative side Lord Jellicoe has recently been reported as saying in the House of Lords that:

> He did not claim that it would necessarily be right for this country to wish to retain the option of the independent nuclear deterrent for all time. It was not inconceivable that there might come a time when the organic structure of the Western alliance was sufficiently strong for Britain to be able with entire confidence to place her nuclear armoury irrevocably in a common pool. (*The Times*, March 18.)

This is a far more reasonable attitude than the rather bombastic utterances of Mr. Thorneycroft in the defence debate might indicate. As for the Labour Party, the very intention of re-negotiating the Nassau agreement suggests (whatever is said publicly) that its leaders reserve the right to carry on with *Polaris*, if a satisfactory *quid pro quo* is not obtained. As has been made clear, what they would like is "provision by one" with "effective sharing among the others"; but this

[16] There is, of course, something to be said in terms of prestige for being admitted to the conclaves of Russia and America. For one thing it would seem to indicate that President Johnson and Mr. Khrushchev have a rather higher idea of us than we have of ourselves at the moment. But it is still a somewhat honorific distinction—whereas the results of a negotiation in NATO would be vital for us.

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kind of arrangement could hardly be negotiated between Great Britain and America alone; it is certain that France would refuse to have anything to do with it—at any rate during President de Gaulle's lifetime. A Labour government is unlikely to arrive at any early satisfactory general solution of the problem of the distribution of nuclear power in NATO. It seems improbable that it would then discard its deterrent in advance of a more hopeful phase of negotiations on this subject which, it must know, will come eventually. What is remarkable about the speeches of Labour spokesmen on defence is more the implicit reservations with which they are dotted rather than any rash resolve to go through with a policy come what may.

It is, of course, both logically and emotionally tempting to wish to get rid of the British deterrent. But it must be recognised that the possession of nuclear weapons is now so involved with the general structure of world diplomacy, and the resulting network of relationships is so complicated, that great caution is required when dealing with a vital section of it. The British deterrent must be seen in its diplomatic, as well as in its military, contexts. These are not simple, and policies whose hallmark is simplicity will not cope with them effectively. It would be a mistake to attribute too much certainty to any solution, which is why the pre-electoral discussion of this issue tends to be so misleading. Sophistication and even scholarship, of the kind which have been made available in America are required, and even then it is often unclear which way important policy decisions should go. But we can comfort ourselves with the reflection that this situation is at least better than the brutal alternatives of the first decade of the bomb. There is safety in subtlety, however scholastic it may appear. Raymond Aron has recently written:

> It is as though the military non-utilisation of these weapons were inseparable from their permanent use in diplomacy.

In an unsafe world we cannot go further than that.

The Moths

It is cold here
In the steel grass
At the foot of the invisible statue
Made by the incurables and called
Justice

At a great distance
An audience of rubber tombstones is watching
The skulls of
The leaders
Strung on the same worm

Darkness moves up the nail

And I am returning to a night long since past
In which the rain is falling and
A crying comes from the stations
And near at hand a voice a woman's
In a jug under the wind
Is trying to sing

No one has shown her
Any statue and
The music keeps rising through her
Almost beginning and
The moths
Lie in the black grass waiting

W. S. Merwin

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Ted Hughes

The Suitor

I WALK SLOWLY up the hill. It is a black night. Cars sizzle past, and the light rain snows through the beams of their headlights. The surface of the road, the pavements, the low walls, the jumbled shrubbery in the cramped gardens, the iron railings, the gates, the puddles, glisten and glitter like coal, as the wind tugs at the street lights. It is after ten. It is December.

I am warmly dressed, and with my hands deep in my raincoat pockets, in gloves, huddle my garments tighter about me. I feel invulnerable, except for my feet: the soles of my black shoes are too thin. They feel like compressed cardboard. I can feel them blotting up the wet. I bought these shoes for dancing, but I have never danced. I have never even gone to a dancing lesson. Now I wear these shoes when I want to feel smart. Clean shoes make a light heart, a proverb I continually prove. Nevertheless, to-night these soles are out of place. I have resigned my feet to their condition. I have retrenched comfort to a point a little above the ankles.

A wind chopping and cutting and swirling in from all directions throws up the boughs of the elms as I pass under the rectory wall, and swipes my lapels against my cheeks, and clogs my hair with the drizzle. It whips my turnups. It roars among the buildings, and thuds and bumps in the distance.

Here is the house. A truly commonplace house, semi-detached, pebble-dashed, with a shallow defence of imperishable shrubs. To-night it is merely one half of a black oblong mass. Oily glints determine the windows. It shows no lights.

By day the gate of this house is a dull sooted green, bearing a small oval sign: "Please shut this." Its door and window frames are the same green. The lower window of the front room or sitting-room or parlour preserves a cold morgue darkness from year-end to year-end. It is the room in which they lay out their dead. The upper window, or front bedroom, is sealed from the road by the backs of the dressing-table mirrors. Next door, everything is the same, except for the colour of the woodwork, which is a dull sooted red. Even so, the green here is no distinction. In the twelve houses before the next side street it recurs seven times. The red is more distinctive, it recurs only twice. Then there is one house brown, and one house black, uniquely.

I am walking slowly, but now I slow down till I move at no more than a saunter. I have seen clearly that the house shows no lights to the front. Perhaps a light shines from the kitchen or side window, but this is difficult to know, because a high wattle fence, parallel to the front garden wall and the road, joins the side of the house to the side of the next and lower house, concealing the side door and kitchen window and the back garden from view of the road. In this fence there is a flimsy door, on the straight concrete path which leads from the front gate, past an offshoot to the front door, to the side door. It is a path I have never trodden, except in imagination. And the door in the high fence, which I have never opened, is shut. I walk slowly, in order to detect signs of light through the chinks of the wattle.

At this moment I am aware of my attention being drawn forcibly in the opposite direction. Since I am peering towards the wattle from my eye-corner, without any public show of curiosity, with my face set directly ahead and downward a little, I have only to switch my eyes across and I see the figure of a man standing under the wall of the derelict smithy at the bottom of the mud

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lane, which at that point leads off, an old farm lane, into waste-land and new building sites beyond. For a moment, I make an effort to see him at all, since he stands in the blackest of the cone of shadow protected from the nearest street light by the corner of the stone-built smithy. I detect him as a form slightly lighter than the shadow, and I see or think I see what must be the pallor of a face. Evidently he is in hiding, his feet on the wet earth of the lane. A man merely waiting would surely stand on the pavement, in good light. Why should anyone wait just there, though? Or, more seriously, why should anyone choose just that place to hide?

What other motive should I suspect? I have walked five miles merely to look at this house, merely for the gamble of walking past this gate from which it is her custom to emerge. A calculation that nowhere on earth would I have quite as good a chance of meeting her, even at this hour, as on the fifty yards of pavement either side of her front gate, has brought me five miles with a concentrated mind. The hope of passing her gate at the very moment she chooses to leave her house, and the faint possibility that my hope may be an intuition, one of those precise and practical signals that bring insects over miles, male to female, has brought me this far and at this hour. And have I no rivals?

Is she exclusively my secret. I scarcely know her. I have watched her at a distance, outstanding among three hundred others. Lately, whenever we have met in the school corridors, she has seemed to smile at me. And here I am, hopeful of a beginning. As yet, I have not even spoken to her. So who may he not be? What could he not tell me about her? I see her life may be more formidably rooted than I had cared to anticipate.

I walk on up the hill as far as the next side street, and by now I am convinced that he is in ambush—for her. I cross the street. I turn downhill, walking casually, whistling thoughtfully, walking on the outer balk of the pavement, noting again the working glitter of the gutter as the fine rain drains from the black road. I look into a street-light and conclude that this rain, if it were daylight, would seem heavier than it now feels, and would seem much too heavy to be strolling and whistling in. In fact, I now see that it is raining hard. The observation causes me no anxiety.

As I approach the lane I move in towards the inner edge of the pavement, keeping my scrutiny down. I am quite self-possessed, only curious. Not until the last moment, as I draw level with the shadow beside the smithy, do I glance up—as an unsuspecting passer-by might well glance up, catching at the last moment a glimpse of someone concealed in shadow and so close. Immediately, I look down and pass on, and for a while I cannot think what to do, for my suspicions have been confirmed in the intense shock of seeing an utterly white face, under the level brim of a trilby, above the tight gorge of a raincoat buttoned to the throat. A very thin face, it seemed. At such close range, the shadow had not protected him. A very long thin face. What age? He had not been leaning against the smithy wall, but standing clear and in the rain, a foot from it. A face without expression, like the face of a man driving at tremendous speed. He had looked straight at me.

A hundred yards further down, I stop at the entrance of the rectory drive, in solid shadow, under the spattering, agitated trees. From here, the curve of the road above presents the front of the smithy plainly lit, and I watch the black gap beyond it. I would prefer to be above him, so that I could observe the house too, which is hidden from this point. Rapidly, I set off to correct my disadvantage. A brief detour through avenues and crescents brings me out again at the side-street above the house, and I stroll down three gateways, finally stopping under an overhanging bush, where I feel concealed. I can see the bottom of the farm lane, but no figure: only black shadow. I wait. I will wait here as long as he waits there.

Minutes pass. Cars zip up the hill from the direction of the town, with steaming tyres. The clock beyond the vicarage elms strikes and the chimes fly over nakedly or

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are muffled away out of hearing as the wind worries them. Eleven o'clock. I hug my garments to me, reshuffling my warmth. Behind me the shrubbery shudders and flinches dismally. I am a black column of patience.

Now it comes to mind that in the minutes between my passing him on my way downhill and my arrival at this position he could easily have left, going either downhill or up. That is an unsettling thought. I had not reckoned on lying in wait for her. To walk past her gate, pleasurably, was all I had wanted. Ought I to move? Ought I perhaps to move down another gateway or two? That would be getting dangerously near, if he is still there.

I will wait here, till the quarter strikes, and if he has not shown himself by then, I will drop the whole business and go home.

I stand.

Lights in the houses opposite go out. One bedroom light there has been burning since I came. The wind jerks and pulls to and fro, and the rain flicks as from a tugged tightrope. Time becomes immeasurably dense and solid, as I begin to feel the patience of the houses and the gardens.

The quarter strikes, concentrating my attention on the black shadow by the smithy. I wait. Now I realise that a figure has already stepped out clear and stands there on the pavement, at the very edge, looking across at her house. I press back into the gate recess, thankful that the house behind me is dark. How amusingly will our situation be reversed if he now crosses the road and walks uphill past me and looks sideways just at the right moment to find me squeezed in hiding here.

I have been ignoring the passing cars. Now a large black saloon coming downhill attracts my notice. Is it slowing? It is slowing, and swinging across from its own side with orange signal in evidence, gliding down, gathering the whole darkness to the blood glow of its brake signals and its rocking stop. I watch, as I might watch a bomb that comes to rest from its astonishing arrival, and lies quiet. My whole consciousness fastens upon it.

SHE IS HERE. I know it, and as doors on both sides open, and the dim inner light comes on, her appearance is no surprise, the great fleece of hair as she straightens under the street-lights and slams the door behind her. But who is this other, hurrying round to her side of the car, towering over her, adjusting her collar with such familiarity? Ah, yes! I sink, as it were, into the bottom of my mind. Surely this is no more than I expected? Hardly, since she is not yet sixteen, and that car is of a managerial volume and opulence. I dislike what I see, and what I infer. I hear his voice, confident and unsubdued, as he leads her back around the car and on to the pavement where, as I now see, a third figure has appeared and awaits them.

They are stopped in conversation. Without forethought or design, I drift out of hiding and loiter slowly down towards them, as if I were waiting for someone to catch me up. To support this appearance, I half-turn, pausing to look back up the hill, whistling softly to myself.

The three figures are in alarming activity. She flies to the wall, as if she had been struck. I see her tall partner's arm rising and falling, as if he chopped wood. I see the third figure rolling on the pavement, climbing to his feet, falling again, rising upright and falling again, as the tall man's arm administers over him. All this is twenty yards away, in the harsh cold wet shadows. In a few seconds, without a sound, it is over. The defeated one sits up and settles a trilby back on his head. At once I recognise the watcher from the lane-end. He slews and sits at the kerb, back bent low, as if he were spitting into the gutter. I find I have walked much closer.

The girl and her escort have disappeared. Into the house? Yes, here he is again, coming down the path as I arrive by the gate. He shows no visible signs of excitement, only his hair seems perhaps slightly crested, and the street-light gleams on the balding skin beneath it. He is very tall, and his powerfully tailored overcoat, his packing of scarf and great gloves, give him a giant shadow. He

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glances at me, and I recognise the type of face, I recognise a familiar category of face. Ah, no! I like him less and less, in these seconds. I like what I infer less and less.

He looks around, briefly, up the road and down. I too, in my assumed aspect of passer-by, notice that the extra figure has vanished. As I continue, I hear the gate clack shut and footsteps go back up the path. I walk on, exhilarated and calmed by what I have seen in simply strolling down thirty yards of pavement. Involuntarily, as if to anchor this extraordinary occasion more surely in its setting, I look across the road to the smithy.

The watcher is back in position, in the shadow.

I look ahead sharply, like one reproved from behind. But I cannot go on, I have to look again.

He is there, he is definitely back. As if he had never moved.

Quickening my step, I retread the circuit of streets and after a shorter absence than before am back under my bush, above the house, looking at the black shadow beside the smithy.

Just in time. The tall figure has re-appeared by his car, gigantic in the tricky light. For some seconds he stands, inspecting the vistas uphill and downhill, officially. But he is now off duty. The car door slams. The engine cries out, and with a breasting lift of the bonnet the car surges across the road and away down the hill, roaring again in the distance, a warning flung back into the sudden emptiness of the road. For a moment this emptiness is stupefying.

Then like a black cat taking its chance the watcher steps out of his shadow, crosses the road and jumps over the wall beside her gate.

Not to be outstripped, and aware that events have moved into a new gear, I walk quickly down the pavement, yet again, this time close to the wall of the gardens. I hear the dry creak of the door in the wattle fence. Has he gone through?

For a moment I stand. I have only one thought: "Who is this watcher and what is he up to?"

The situation seems already so much my own, I have no thought of breaking free. How am I to get closer?

The faint fancy that she may yet this night be glad of my intrusion gives me a slight smile. But the fancy is in place, for that long thin white face is somewhere on the other side of that door and full of purpose. The memory of that face makes me reckless.

AVOIDING the gate with its sounding latch, I slip over the low wall. I reach the door soundlessly, by walking on the garden soil beside the concrete path. Now, like setting a mousetrap, I ease the door open. I stare through the widening gap as if intensity enough could put out feelers to explore the corners of the back garden. I sidle through the gap and stand.

The wind bullying around the house is a help and gives me confidence, for a bowling dustbin lid would be in order. But how can I hope to hear him? His movements are certain to be as cautious as mine, and he may be far more expert. Keeping now to the concrete path, I stalk down the house side, touching the side door gingerly with my fingertips as I feel with my sodden shoe soles for the surface of the path. I am now standing at the house corner.

Incredible! I hold the house where she moves, breathes, listens, is, and yet for fully five minutes have not given her a thought. But I can hear nothing, as I peer into the back garden darkness, nothing but the irregular wind, coming and going.

Has the rain stopped? Just about.

Perhaps he is just around the corner here, within inches of me, listening for me as tensely as I am listening for him. I leave the path, moving out sideways, intending to find the fence between this garden and the garden next door, if there is a fence, and so feel along that to the bottom of the garden. But between house and fence, treading in some sort of loose soil, I am suspended. I listen.

A sharp crack, a heavy weight on a thick stick, from the bottom of the garden, and over towards the middle. I ache with immobility, allowing time for him to recover from his fright. Gradually, moving only

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when a special press of wind covers me, I move down the side of the garden. Now twigs come against my knees, prickles: gooseberries or raspberries. I crouch slowly, and feel over the soft soil with my spread hands. Is this a path beside me? I did not seek it before, thinking it might be cindered. This is bare hard earth.

Taking a hint from my position, I creep forward on hands and knees, keeping my feet well raised off the earth behind me, all the while staring into the dark till I feel as if my whole head were one baffled eye. That, to my right, seems to be a bower of low trees, bare at this season, or it may be the frame of a rose arbour. Ahead, either a high rough hedge or a thicket. The sudden onsets of wind seem to confuse my sight and my thoughts, and I realise I can do no more till I have another clue. I decide to remain motionless. I am pleased with the stealth of my advance so far. The wind rummages among these bushes with such haphazard abandon, it will take all my attention to distinguish the human sounds from the elemental.

I wait. I listen. I would see more if I were on my feet.

Slowly I turn my head, pressing my cheek to my shoulder, rolling my eyes into the far corners, till I see the black mass of the house behind me.

Why is it without light? I had expected to see at least a bedroom window lit, however heavy the curtains. Has she gone into a dark house? Is she sitting in the dark?

For some seconds, I hold my position.

The double chime of the half-hour is torn to scraps by an assault of wind, and absorbed by the unmoved earth.

Now I ease the strains of my joints, reordering the stresses in preparation for rising to my feet. I want no cracking of the bone-articulations. I ease my whole position. Gradually I transfer weight from my hands to my knees and bring my left knee forward, setting the sole of my left foot to the earth. I am now almost in the starting attitude of a sprinter.

At this moment I freeze. It comes from behind me. It is incredible.

Clear, naked on my ear as if they took form in the very fibre of the nerve, softly popping flute notes!

I express my amazement by pulling a slow, skin-stretching grimace, a contorting leopard-mask, in the pitch darkness. I hold it, as the flute-notes play over my brain.

From behind me, immediately! Whoever is playing must be crouching there, smiling at me as he plays. He has watched my every move, for he has crept up with me step for step, he is playing his flute for the sheer idiocy of our situation.

Again, this time curving my body a little, I turn, slowly, because I may be wrong. I may be still undiscovered.

And I *was* wrong. How did I miss seeing him before? How has he missed seeing me? With his back to me, he is squatting on his heels, facing the house, his trilby bowed forward slightly, moving slightly as the flute notes, in complete disregard for the wind, climb, step by step, step along, climb, step along, descend tossing something, plunge and search deeply over a dark floor, emerge, climb, climb, work at a height, flaking bright bits off....

The house is utterly dark.

I ease back, till I too am crouching on my heels, and I turn slowly, my whole concentration on the flute notes, for their first faltering, and on the brim of his trilby, for its first alertness. Now I could stretch forward and tap him on the shoulder. Gloating, I fumble on the earth for a stone, but all I can find is a twig, a forked nub of twig. Evidence! I pocket it. He does not know I am here.

And now in a kind of inane ecstasy, I writhe up my features again, stretching my mouth wide, making my eyes pop, like a man laughing at tremendous volume or uttering a battle-cry, but in absolute and prolonged silence, while the flute notes dot and carry about the black garden and climb the wall and tap at the dark window and come circling back to the bowed attentive figure here, not three feet in front of me.

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R. Prawer Jhabvala

Open City

Letter from Delhi

ALL THROUGH the winter there is a stream of foreign visitors. They hold conferences and go shopping and admire Indian architecture, art, culture, food, tradition, and whatever else there is to admire. They also, more or less each one of them, have an interview with Mr. Nehru, whom they ask questions and to whom they tender advice. They all seem to have this in common, that they feel a deep personal concern for India's problems; they see that something is out of joint and are eager, in a really nice, completely unselfish way, to help set it right.

What is it about Delhi that makes almost everyone who comes here so passionately interested in its affairs? It may be because everything seems so very open and accessible. Delhi is a capital and at a certain level a very small and compact one, where inside information is freely available and it is easy to be or to seem closely in touch. One always knows everything long before and much better than the newspapers, for the place buzzes with stories of what really happened between the Defence Minister and the Chiefs of Staff and what one Minister said to another at a cabinet meeting. Moreover, top people are so excessively available that one gets an impression as if our Ministers are not only ready but also eager and waiting to give intimate interviews to any foreign visitor who cares to seek them out. This is very flattering for the foreign visitor, who probably does not operate at this level back where he comes from; and he consequently begins to feel himself intimately involved in local affairs and to develop a feeling of almost personal responsibility towards them.

And it is not only political life that seems open and accessible. So much goes on out in the streets that it is impossible to get away from the most intimate glimpses, even if one only catches them in passing through the windows of one's car. The shops in the bazaars all have open fronts, so that it is quite easy to see just what exactly each one is selling and also how the salesman and the customers are bargaining together inside. If you pass a squatters' colony, you will notice that the huts are patched together out of bits of old board and broken bricks and battered tin, and that they are too small to hold very much, so that people have to take their baths and do their cooking and their quarrelling out of doors. Religious fanatics, barbers, masseurs, eunuchs, and hunger-strikers all practise their professions out in the open, and since there are very few public lavatories (and not all that many private ones either) intimate human functions have to be carried out in full view of anyone who cares to look. The streets are crowded with bridegrooms riding on mares to the houses of their brides and of corpses being borne on biers down to the river to be burned (and if you wish, you can watch the pyre being lit and the body placed on it and wait till you hear the skull burst).

All this seems to be especially tantalising to people who come from countries where life is lived very largely behind closed doors and drawn curtains. Delhi offers them the novel sensation of being in touch with everything that goes on and, by extension, with the problems involved. These problems loom obvious and large—again, in contrast to other, more advanced countries where they are no longer so obvious and have to be sought out by trained economists and social scientists. But here they are anybody's meat and there are enough of them and of sufficient variety to satisfy all tastes. Political problems,

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social, economic, religious, moral, cultural, linguistic, something for everyone: and on all sides the clearest evidence of them is being offered, so that it is not at all difficult to gather proofs and statistics and talk with as much expertise as any expert. Our foreign visitors are for ever being led to believe that, one step more, and they will hold their own particular Indian problem in the hollow of their hand. Naturally they try and take that one step more, but when it comes out to be time and time again not the last after all, a certain restlessness sets in. It is always at this point that our visitors begin to find the interviews with Ministers no longer as satisfying as they once were and to start hankering after invitations to private homes, which alone will give them, so they now believe and persuasively tell us, "a true insight into the lives of the people."

BUT WHICH PEOPLE? Our foreign visitor's social conscience is tender and highly developed, and his first glances will be towards those miserable huts he sees wherever he drives in his taxi and the sight of which so appalled him when he first arrived. What sort of people live in them, what do they think about, how do they talk to one another, what do they eat, etc., etc.? If only it were possible to know! If only, imbued as one is with sympathy and understanding, one might be allowed access into those poor, dark, unknown lives! But it is not possible. No slum dweller is available to invite a foreign visitor to tea, and perhaps it is just as well, for even if there were no language difficulty, there would not really be much to talk about. There is not in the world's history any record of fruitful dialogue between those who have enough to eat and those who don't. Our foreign visitor turns away from the sight of those wretched hovels and feels sad. No longer quite as sad, perhaps, or as outraged as he felt when he first saw them—it never takes long to get used to other people's poverty—but the poor of Delhi will always be sure of his concern. He will often talk about them, and when he does so, he will make that special face we all make when we feel guilty about something (whether it is *apartheid*, political prisoners, or starving children) but are no longer sure that our feeling is still as deep as it ought to be.

BRANCHING OUT from India Gate (which we may take as the centre of everything that is best in official New Delhi) there are broad, tree-lined avenues. On these, each in its own spacious acre or two of land, stand large white houses, very dignified with their Palladian façades, their well-kept lawns rolling away in the front and their servants' quarters clustered together at the back. Let us pretend that we are a very lucky foreign visitor indeed, who has had an introduction to the master of one of these mansions. The temporary master, rather: for these houses, which were once the residences of British civil servants, have most of them been acquired by the government and are allotted to Ministers and other high-ranking politicians, to senior officers of the armed forces and government servants in the upper echelons. As long as they hold their offices, they hold their houses, but once they are transferred or retired or—political life has its vicissitudes everywhere—sacked, it is good-bye to house and garden too, and they, like everyone else in an increasingly tight housing situation, have to scramble for whatever living space they can. But for the host of our lucky foreign visitor this evil day is not yet come, and he is still in radiant possession of the fruits of his promotion.

The invitation is for Sunday lunch, and since it is winter this is held in the garden. Everything is just perfect. The lawn has been well watered and is green, the roses and the chrysanthemums are in bloom, the winter sun is shining brilliantly, the sky is azure and delicately flecked with a few white puffs of cloud. Garden chairs and tables have been arranged on the lawn and dotted among them are striped umbrellas to guard one from the sun, which is mild and warm but tends to darken the complexion. Servants in white uniforms offer drinks from trays, beer, gin, rum, and whisky—all local Indian products and not too expensive—for the gentlemen, fruit juices for the ladies. Here is our host, an Additional Secretary to the Government of India, a man of weight, both literally and metaphorically, but looking completely relaxed and informal in baggy, out-of-date flannels, a yellow pullover, and a sports jacket. He smokes a pipe and speaks with an accent which shows that, though his schooling was Indian, his university days were spent at Oxford. The conversation is entirely in English: not only out of deference to the sprinkling of foreign guests—besides our visitor, there is also a Scandinavian expert on soil erosion, a Dutch journalist, and an enthusiastic American couple from the Ford Foundation—but also because English is the only

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language everyone has in common. As happens only in the top layers of Delhi society, this is an entirely non-communal gathering, consisting of Bengali-speaking Bengalis, Telugu- or Tamil- or Malayalam-speaking South Indians, Marathi- or Gujerati-speaking Bombaywallas, Urdu-speaking Muslims, etc., who are forced to (and perhaps rather like to?—they do it so well, with such ease and fluency) converse together in English both for their private and official purposes. With one or two exceptions—of whom more later—they are all high-ranking government servants, all talking in loud, confident voices, all widely-travelled, knowing, Westernised, and with modern wives.

Our foreign guest will probably not be surprised at these modern wives, but an Indian from a less advanced milieu well might be. Not only surprised, but indignant too: he might even, he frequently does, write letters to the newspapers about them. For these wives do not at all conform to the traditional pattern of Indian womanhood. They wear their hair short; they apply all sorts of modern make-up; their blouses are cut low. They have opinions and take a vigorous share in the conversation and allow men, who are neither brother, husband, or father to them, to talk to them familiarly and call them by their first names. Some of them smoke cigarettes; some can even be seen to eschew the fruit juices and help themselves unashamedly to the gin. The hostess, who is perhaps typical of all of them, is a tall, elegant, well-developed woman, with a voice almost as loud as her husband's. Her children are away at boarding-schools but all the same she keeps herself very busy. She has many outside interests which range from the cultural—she is secretary to a music, dance, and drama society—to her welfare work among destitute widows. She is an excellent hostess, a quality which is both inbred (she comes from a well-to-do family) and has been stimulated during her years as the wife of an important government officer who has many contacts to maintain. Her servants are superbly trained—how they glide over the smooth lawn! how solicitously they bend over the guests!—her glass and cutlery imported and impeccable, the food, a judicious mixture of Eastern and Western cooking, beautifully prepared and served. Most of the Indian guests make for the Western dishes, the Western guests —who are just crazy about chapattis—for the Indian dishes. The birds are chirping in the trees, the guests eat and drink and chatter in their garden chairs. Everyone is happy. It is a lovely party.

THERE ARE TWO GUESTS who don't quite fit in. One of them is a prosperous businessman, dressed in too good a suit and wearing a ring or two too many. He has been invited because he has in the past shown a lot of hospitality to his host, with whom he has dealings over import licences or some such matter (his wife has also been invited but it was tacitly understood that she would not come). The other misfit is a poor relation of the host's, who wasn't invited at all but dropped in to pay his respects to his important cousin and was drawn into the lunch by mistake. Actually we are taking quite a bit of dramatic licence here because he would not have been drawn in at all: instead he would have begged and been permitted to take his leave the moment the guests arrived. But we need him here, for our foreign visitor, ever eager to know all aspects of India, is going to strike up a conversation with him. Both with him, and with the businessman. And so stimulating and friendly are these two conversations going to be that the businessman and the poor relation will both invite the foreigner to visit them in their homes. For they too are eager, on the one hand, to demonstrate their traditional Indian hospitality and, on the other, to make an interesting contact and learn what goes on in the great world of nylon and television beyond their shores.

SO IT HAPPENS that a day or two later the foreign visitor is sitting in a taxi on his way to the businessman's house. This is not in the area of spacious villas left behind by the British but further out, in a newly developed area which has been parcelled out and sold in plots to people who could afford to buy them. There are not many trees here; in fact, there aren't any, nor grass, nor anything green. Everything is still rather new and raw, still dusty, with a lot of scaffolding and building materials and makeshift huts to accommodate the building workers. But the finished houses are splendid. Our foreign visitor stands agape at the wonderful residence his second host has built for himself. No expense has been spared here, no decoration suggested by a vivid taste omitted. There are little Moorish balconies and Indian domes and squiggly lattice work and an air-conditioner in every window. Inside all is marble flooring and in the entrance hall there

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is a fountain lit up with green, yellow, and red bulbs. The curtains on the windows and in the doorways are of silk, the vast sofa-suites are upholstered in velvet, the telephone is red, and huge vases are filled with plastic flowers.

There are rather more guests than the room can comfortably accommodate. Everybody—friends, relatives, acquaintances, business contacts—has been invited. The gentlemen sit on one side of a great circle of sofas and chairs, their wives on the other. The principal activity on the gentlemen's side is the drinking of Scotch whisky, which is fearfully expensive but which the host and his sons pour with a liberal hand. They will not endure an empty glass and there is much rallying and teasing as to the drinking capacity of each guest. This leads to a great deal of boisterous laughter and back-slapping, and the foreign guest, not wishing to seem out of anything, also smiles, though a little uncertainly for the banter is all in what he presumes is Hindustani (actually it is Punjabi). However, he too gets his share of attention as one after another of the guests comes up to engage him in courteous English conversation, which always starts off with the enquiry of how does he like India, leading on to an account of how much his interlocutor enjoyed the time he spent in foreign countries such as England, America, or Germany, and concluding with a barrage of eager questions as to the availability, in the foreigner's country of origin, and current price of transistor radios? tape-recorders? pop-up toasters?

From time to time the foreigner throws surreptitious glances at the ladies on the other side of the room. He notes that they do not seem to be enjoying themselves, though they are dressed up for enjoyment in their best silk saris with shiny satin blouses and flowers and a lot of oil in their hair and a great load of golden jewellery. Each holds a glass of pineapple juice in her hand and stares in front of her with patient eyes; there is no conversation. Their menfolk, who are having such a boisterous good time on their side of the room, don't seem to have the slightest difficulty in ignoring that silent other half; but the foreigner, brought up differently, feels a kind of social embarrassment for these unhappy ladies and wonders whether there is no way of starting up a conversation with them. He soon finds there is not, for whenever by some mischance one of them encounters his glance, she looks away in extreme confusion as if an indecent act had been committed. He is sad, and begins to revise the estimate of the status of Indian women he has so blithely formed at his former host's house. Perhaps they are, after all, not as advanced as he had been led to believe.

HE HAS NO OPPORTUNITY to enlarge his findings at his third host's house, for here he doesn't encounter any women at all. But then, everything here is very different from both his previous places of entertainment. His third host, though his relative is an Additional Secretary, is himself only a minor employee in one of the Ministries, and consequently the housing allotted to him is of a much humbler type. It is also a very long way out. Our foreign visitor has long since left behind India Gate and the tree-lined avenues and struck out into less glamorous surroundings. He passes workshops and potteries and the great gaunt shell of a building which was once started but, for lack of funds, never finished. He travels through government housing colonies, all of which look alike, and also through much empty waste land on which building work is going on to transform it into more government colonies.

His host's colony, when he finally reaches it, is like all the others: row upon row of straight and narrow double-storeyed houses painted yellow. There are many children, and a great deal of washing strung up, but no trees and no grass and no parks, though there is a deserted children's playground with a chute built of stone and a broken swing. It takes him some time to find his host's house, for not only are the rows of houses identical, they are also named and numbered in a very mysterious fashion. *DIV 9/438* is not an easy address to locate—though, did our foreign visitor but know it, it is a very revealing one. Like all the identifications attached to government housing, it is an exactly graded indication of rank, ensuring that once you know a man's address, you also know what sort of post he holds, what salary he draws, and whether he is entitled to a pension.

Our foreigner finds himself the only guest and in a tête-à-tête with his host. The host's family seems to have been banished, though muffled sounds can be heard from some adjacent room, and once there is a feminine cough behind the door which makes the host nervously excuse himself and return, looking even more nervous, after some urgent whispering outside. Together with the family, all signs of family life have been cleaned out of the room. Everything looks very scrubbed and very bare. There

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is little furniture, just a couple of not too steady cane-chairs for host and guest to sit on and a table covered with a clean if somewhat faded tablecloth and a wall-cupboard, the contents of which are hidden by a cotton curtain sagging from a string. A brightly coloured calendar of Rama and Sita (or is it Krishna and Radha?), presented with the compliments of a firm of sanitary contractors, hangs on the white-washed wall, and plaster figures of gods stand in little whitewashed niches.

A most sumptuous tea has been prepared for the lone guest: there are mounds of coloured sweetmeats and all sorts of fried things green with chili as well as, in deference to European taste, some thick slices of white bread thickly buttered. Two cups of very milky tea are brought in on a tin tray by a little servant boy about ten years old and wearing a torn shirt; he walks carefully, but nevertheless some of the tea slops over into the saucers. The host, in an agony of social unease, keeps cracking his finger-joints, and the guest eats more than he wants because there is so much and so much trouble has been taken. Conversation is very, very difficult.

If, however, the visitor is only patient enough, his host will begin to relax. The atmosphere changes and suddenly the host is talking—and not only talking but doing so with the greatest intimacy and urgency, like a man who has long waited for an opportunity to unburden himself. He freely mentions his salary and the difficulty of managing on it. He complains of rising prices and the cost of education; sadly dwells on the fact that children wear their shoes out very quickly and that they frequently, in spite of the high cost of medicines, fall sick. His house is a long way away from his office and because the buses are both irregular and overcrowded, he has had to take a loan and buy a bicycle, on which he cycles to and fro some twelve miles a day. His eldest daughter is fifteen—he himself is in his mid-thirties—and it is not long now before arrangements will have to be made for her marriage; and though of course the dowry system has been legally abolished (he smiles wryly at this), costly presents will have to be made to the bridegroom and his family and princely wedding entertainments provided for them and all their acquaintances. His sons will have to be put through colleges to get degrees to enable them to get good jobs in government service. He himself, of course, went to college and did his B.A. degree; he points to the framed scroll certifying this on the wall and falls into reminiscences of his student days when he played cricket and loved English literature. Suddenly he is reciting *The Lady of Shalott.*

BUT OUR FOREIGN VISITOR is not yet satisfied. He feels there is more, much more, that he has missed and for which no one will offer him an explanation. And perhaps he is right. The trouble with Delhi—and for Delhi one could say India—is that it appears to wear its heart on its sleeve and so incites everyone who comes to try and read it. Yet this openness is deceptive, and the place is actually extremely —not secretive so much as reticent. One sees a lot in the street but it is all *appearance*; there is no way of finding out what it is all about except by living here for a long time and with patience. The foreigner may be invited into a home, he will be treated with great heartiness and a genuine hospitality, but he will be shown only what is fitting for him to see; what his host wants him to see, or thinks he would like to see. The rest has to be guesswork.

What chance has the short-term visitor of ever guessing that the Additional Secretary, in spite of his baggy flannels and his Oxford accent, still sometimes consults his family astrologer? Or that the repressed looking ladies he met at the businessman's house are strong-minded, vigorous women whose rule over their households is undisputed, who revel in fierce family fights and, in their lighter moments, are full of a gay, bawdy wit? And at his third host's house, where so much was said and so intimately—can he ever guess what went on in the adjacent room to which the family was banished, or what was whispered behind the door?

Reticence is not confined to private lives. A musical recital is a perfectly public occasion; anyone can buy a ticket and come in. The foreigner sits and listens to the music, he might even enjoy it for an hour or two; then he leaves for his next engagement and so do most of the other people in the front rows. This is the signal for the people in the cheaper seats at the back to throng forward, and for their friends, who couldn't afford to buy tickets, to wander in through various doors and sit wherever they can; and then the musician *really* starts to play.

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C. G. Jung's Confession

Psychology as a Language of Faith — By PHILIP RIEFF

But in what myth does man live nowadays? In the Christian myth, the answer might be. "Do you *live in it?" I asked myself. To be honest, the answer was no. For me, it is not what I live by. "Then we no longer have any myth?" "No, evidently we no longer have any myth." "But then what is your myth—the myth in which you do live?" At this point the dialogue with myself became uncomfortable and I stopped thinking. I had reached a dead end.*

JUNG

IN THE SPRING of 1957, late in his eighty-first year, Jung reluctantly began to recall, for his disciple and emanuensis, Aniela Jaffé, the story of his life.[1] It is, from beginning to end, the record of a struggle to find, for himself, the "personal myth" by which he could live, free of the Christian myth which had failed to give his father a workable sense of well being.

Paul Jung, pastor, had become a psychiatric case, complete with confinements in an asylum. C. G. Jung, psychiatrist, attributed his father's miserable life to the collapse of the Christian myth—more precisely, to the failing power of that myth to control the inner conflicts of those subject to it.

Accepting as the first premise of his psychology, the failure of established religions in the West, Jung looked back on his entire life as the fortunate unfolding of a counter-myth, one that saved him from the fate of his father, and, in its development from the dreams and visions of his childhood to the hypotheses of his old age, traced the convergence of divinely inspired messages and scientific intellection into a religious psychology—the form of faith best suited to the middle of the twentieth century.

The Christian myth was no longer therapeutic. Jung's career was seen by himself, at its end, as a successful research for a functional equivalent, in psychotherapy, to what he assumed must have been the therapeutic effect of Christian imagery and institutions.[2]

As Jung understood his life, he was less a discoverer of God than discovered.[3] So far as he imagined himself a vehicle upon which the therapeutic power re-entered our culture, Jung followed in the classical mode by which all prophets have understood themselves, less the choosers of a therapeutic symbolism than chosen by it. Jung insists on the distinction, in all the anecdotes of dreams and visions that give the early parts of his autobiography its fascination. Yet he waited until he was beyond the reach of sceptical reviewers before he published the secret of his life: that burden of prophecy with which he had been charged from the time of his earliest remembered dream.

IN THAT DREAM, which occurred sometime between his third and fourth years (and preoccupied him all his life, according to his own testimony), the nameless "subterranean God," the aspect of divinity permanently opposed to "Lord Jesus," introduced itself to Jung. Yet, if the subterranean God was "not to be named," nevertheless it did have a describable form. What the frightened little boy had seen in his dream, as the old man recollected more than three-quarters of a century later, must have been a "ritual phallus." Indeed, throughout

[1] *Memories, Dreams, Reflections.* Recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffé. Collins and Routledge & Kegan Paul (London, 1963) and Pantheon Books Inc. (New York).

[2] This has little to do with questions of truth. All religions may be considered, in Jungian terms, as "true" so far as they draw on "archetypal experience," or the great images "which lie behind emotions."

[3] Even Jung's style was, he thought, involuntary. He "had no choice but to write everything down in the style selected by the unconscious itself." Being a prophet, *i.e.*, a mouthpiece of the divine, Jung refused to blame himself for the fact that "archetypes speak the language of high rhetoric, even of bombast."

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Jung's autobiography, it is assumed without question that was what the old man came to understand and the boy actually experienced. Jung used his life ruthlessly in order to illustrate his theory, understanding himself as his best case—most successfully completed—of the therapeutic transfer required of modern man: from old faith to new psychology.

Subterranean gods, the suppressed aspect of divinity, reappeared to Jung throughout his youth, "whenever anyone spoke too emphatically about Lord Jesus." Indeed, after that model dream, which corrected forever in his imagination the one-sidedness of Christian doctrine, "Lord Jesus never became quite real." Of course the dark gods were "a frightful revelation." After all, Jung was the son of a pious and official Christian. This revelation "had been accorded me without my seeking it," as if the unconscious of the father had been visited upon the son, there to begin the process of correcting an imbalance that was to destroy the father.

Imbalances are corrected by fusion, as we shall see. Thus Jesus himself became the dark Lord, identical with the phallus. It is in this sense that Jung remained a Christian. But this is private Christianity, scarcely reconcilable with the institutional kind, except at the final expense of the latter. The sense in which Jung remained a Christian, then, was that he tried to work through, in his life and writings, "the religious problems of the Christian," especially that Christian for whom the myth of Jesus no longer held an adequate therapeutic effect.

It is reasonable to expect that Jung would interpret his religious experience in Jungian terms. More precisely, the elaboration of Jungian terms organised his religious experience. His correction of Christianity lay, therefore, in the revelation to him of its suppressed or neglected underside. God in heaven had "His underground counterpart." In this sense, however, Jung's therapeutic doctrine is far more than the correcting of an unbalanced imagery. He does not simply return a Christian to Christianity, a Jew to Judaism, a pagan to his paganism, as he claimed. By rendering the suppressed underside conscious and acceptable, Jung legitimates the demonic and destructive as having their own rights, because they carry therapeutic potential. When the subterranean God erupted from out of the German unconscious, Jung was neither indignant nor morally offended. That eruption was therapeutically useful to the Germans. The incidental sacrifice of many Jews to that therapeutic eruption was an unfortunate by-product of the eruption itself. Jung was not "anti-Semitic"—not in any of the usual senses of that condition. Rather, being unconstricted by the surface side of the moral law and its personified symbol, the "pale Galilean," as Jung's romantic predecessors put it, he could even utter some welcoming sighs of terror at the reappearance, in political dress, of the dark gods.

In Jung's interpretation, the trouble with Freud was that he had remained a Jew, who had exchanged strict ritual obedience to the Law for strict intellectual obedience to the laws of sexuality. "At bottom," the "psychological qualities" of Jahweh and sexuality "remained the same." In his limited puritanical way, Freud was right. "The lost God had now," in the twentieth century, to be "sought below, not above." Unfortunately, being a Jew, Freud sought for the lost God too single-mindedly. The "realm of darkness," from out of which the new light was to come, contained much more than sexuality. It contained, in fact, a veritable old treasure of symbols, discarded as nonsense, which could be refurbished for use against our insanely narrow rationalism. What had to be recovered was not the action of the irrational, but its symbolism. Not cannibalism but the motif of cannibalism, re-enacted in ceremony or re-articulated in art, was the therapeutic device by which men might save themselves both from cannibalism and from too thorough a suppression of it. Not God but a more ample idea of God might save post-Christians from the psychological consequences of their loss of faith. Jung's father had not known how to use his dreams to preserve his sense of well-being. After drifting away from theology, the creative impulse had lodged in psychiatry. To psychologise: this was the modern and private equivalent of the theogonic process by which all previous cultures had constructed their public systems of salvations.

It was in his twelfth year, after three nights of tormented effort to escape the vision apparently intended for his inner eye alone, that Jung finally saw, in a definitive fantasy, the ruin of his ancestral religion. He saw, in fact, the roof of the Basel cathedral, glittering in the sun. And then the thought of God, sitting far above the church, on his throne, occurred to the boy. And then—after three days and nights during which Jung tried to prevent himself from experiencing what he knew, in the wisdom of old age, had been an "illumination"—came the apparently sacrilegious judgment of God upon his own church. He (*i.e.*, God) let loose "an enormous turd" which fell upon the church, destroying it. Precisely this, Jung understood in the full flight of his psychological imagination, was his formative "experience of grace." It was then, after having "experienced grace"

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in such an alarming way, that his "true responsibility began." Having been given, unasking, the most intimate and revealing knowledge of the "immediate living God who stands, omnipotent and free, above His Bible and His Church," Jung's prophetic mission was to bring a new grace to those who suffered, like his father, from the failure of the Christian miracle of grace to mitigate their pangs of conscience.

There can be no doubt about the way in which Jung looked back on his entire life: his was a prophetic mission. God had made Himself severely understood to Jung; it was his appointed task, the purpose for which a small boy had been subjected by prophetic visions, to communicate, through his matured psychology, not the God of the Bible or Church, but the dark subterranean God of each man's secret life, unknown even to the holder of the secret unless he be informed by that psychology which is the scientific equivalent of prophetic vision.

THUS JUNG FOUND his way out of the religious dead-end which had destroyed his father: in a private religion, revealed originally to himself alone, which he then translated without disclosing its divine source into a psychotherapy. It is a religion uniquely free from limiting criteria of true and false, right and wrong. The ideal character type produced by Jung's private religion is neither mystic nor ascetic, but therapeutic—a person assessing even his own myth in terms of how much it contributes to his sense of well-being.

There is no arguing with revelation. Jung's was a personal language of faith, revelatory, and therefore beyond danger of being invalidated by argument or contrary experience. These revelatory experiences, and the terms he adapted for their expression, remained "true"—*i.e.*, therapeutic—for him. The gods spoke to Jung. One can believe him or not, the effect remains; because the old public myth no longer served to therapeutic effect, he created his own private myth, and felt much better for it.

Jung's personal myths have little enough to do with the classical languages of faith, and nothing whatever to do with the language of science. In fact, Jungian theory amounts at once to a private religion and anti-science, and, for this reason, has held out, despite its downright unreadability and intellectual shoddiness, some comfort for contemporary literary humanists, who, bored by the bread-making miracles of modern science, need to be reassured that man cannot live well by bread alone. Jung has encouraged something like religious feeling, without the bother of churches or the imposition of consequent ethics. Against the democracy of the scientific intellect, he represents the aristocracy of emotional profundity. His therapeutist is a charismatic; his therapy is a theogonic process.

God-making, nowadays, is no small miracle. Even as a private art, the theogonic process may out-match, in therapeutic effect, the essentially collective effort of science. Moreover, a therapeutic is revealed to very few, while science may be taught to many. How much greater and healthier it is, Jung believed, to produce, from within oneself, an unchanging God than to change the world. Above all, Jung detested modernity and social progress.[4] His interior and subterranean gods are inveterate snobs and erudite sceptics, characters in praise of that glorious past in which only the philosophical few lived like human beings.

Jungian psychology is not merely reactionary, but also, because it is founded entirely upon his own revelatory language and intimate experience, irremediably anti-intellectual. It is time for both the authentically religious and the scientific to dismiss Jung's doctrine, as an unworthy amusement for the distraction of those who, by being thus entertained, confirm the nasty habit developed among cultivated moderns of thinking too seriously about themselves alone.

Jung's appeal to the literary humanist, and the post-religious propertied classes, is based upon an elaborately romantic contempt for "mere intellect."[5] Barring intellect, we have only the logic of feeling; and, in Jung's terms, this has been discovered to be an automatic balancing of emotions, main illustration of the famous Jungian compensations. What remains? The inexorable particularity in *rerum natura*, in Jung's phrase "the terrible ambiguity of an immediate experience." Some reconstruction must take place. Some spontaneous rhythm, unpolluted by intellect, must be discovered in history and personality. Note that a rhythm must be discovered, not imposed; and with that one step, we are right in the middle of romantic dialectics.

THE ROMANTICS LOVED the dialectical method, or what they thought was dialectic. Plato be-

[4] Because it has not created "a myth of our own," with which mankind can enact a "second creation," giving the world a new "objective existence."

[5] Intellectualism Jung calls "our vulnerable spot." Indeed, "knowledge does not enrich us; it removes us more and more from the mythic world in which we were once at home by right of birth." When Jung confronted the so-called "primitives," he realised how psychologically "impoverished and down-at-heel we are." In the Jungian definition, poverty is more psychological than economic, being the way in which "meaning" is "formulated by our reason" uninstructed by a vital mythic predicate.

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came a patron saint of feeling. In Heine's famous words:

> Plato and Aristotle! These are not merely two systems; they are also types of two distinct human natures, which from immemorial time, under every sort of cloak, stand more or less inimically opposed.... Enthusiastic, mystical, Platonic natures reveal [religious] ideas and their corresponding symbols from the bottomless depths of their souls. Practical, ordering, Aristotelian natures build up from these ideas and symbols a solid system, a dogma and a cult.

Of course, the romantics did not understand Plato. As Plato used the dialectical method, one does not decide between two contradictory propositions but by the appearance of a new insight which transcends and in a way includes both sides. In this process, the interplay of concepts is as important as their resolution. The romantics saw only one delightful feature of the dialectical method: it was an open system, not a closed one; there is always a way out. Unable to comprehend the idea of spontaneous intellectual activity as a sublime mode of personal combat, the romantics wrenched dialectics from the pedagogic into an historical context, where Jung found it.

The romantic philosophers loved dialectics, with the Socratic labour gone clean out of the method. It became a neat parlour trick, easily perpetrated: first one term, then its opposite, then—from behind one's back, out of one's "unconscious"—the third concept, saviour, synthesis. No longer did the pedagogic interplay, the clash of reasons on the field of conversation, justify either the method or the result; rather, the method was transferred to the stage of historical action, where that third term was waiting all the time in the wings to come on and save the show. The interplay became a story line, an attempt to keep the suffering audience from becoming too restless while waiting for the entrance of the saviour, who, when he did appear, never quite succeeded in gaining their attention. In the Jungian dialectic, that ignored saviour is the Unconscious himself, come to correct the intellectual arrogance of consciousness.

The passage from Heine quoted above became the *leit motif* of Jung's most widely influential book, *Psychological Types* (1921). Platonic and Aristotelian become *introvert* and *extrovert*. Each person, each culture, each religion has simultaneously (1) a tendency to fall towards either characterological pole, and (2) a tendency to compensate for the one-sidedness of its type. This dualism measures the rhythm of history, both case-history and race-history. Jung's sort of polarisation, rendered inferior to personality, supplies a new doctrinal abstract for the romantic movement, a fresh statement of opposition between reason and spontaneity, thought and feeling, restriction and freedom, distortion and honesty. Jung, then, was hardly proposing anything new in his break from Freud. On the contrary, he was returning to pre-Freudian motifs, without taking back with him the essential ideas of a dynamic unconscious, or of truly unconscious conflict.

JUNG IS POPULAR because he turned the nighttime of horror of Freud's warring duality of love and death into the day-time optimism of a new and synthesising principle. Precisely in that "terrible ambiguity of immediate experience"—the complaint against reality of every modern secular intellectual in search of a system with which to reduce his uncertainty and indecision—Jung saw a randomness that supplied a new grace for those permanently out of touch with the Lord Jesus. Just the disorder of the interior life was its salvation.

> When Faust exclaims "feeling is everything," he is expressing merely the antithesis to the intellect, therefore only reaches the other extreme; he does not achieve that totality of life and of his own psyche in which feeling and thought are joined in a third and higher principle.[6]

What was this synthesising principle? Not one of thinking at all—Jung calls both feeling and intellect modes of thinking—but a principle of action. Mental life is "perpetually creative." In this creative activity, intellect and spontaneity were combined. "Each new day reality is created by the psyche." This reality Jung called fantasy. The higher third principle can be understood either as a practical goal or as the fantasy which creates the goal. Fantasy is the Jungian successor to Christian faith in its practical (*i.e.*, therapeutic) aspect. Once he understood the therapeutic mission of fantasy, Jung had the missionary modern assignment of codifying fantasies and finding exemplary parallels from comparative cultural history. Fantasy, we know, is "just as much feeling as thought." From fantasy

> issues the solution to all unanswerable questions; it is the mother of all possibilities, in which the inner and the outer world, like all psychological antitheses, are joined in living union. Fantasy it was and ever is which fashions the bridge between the irreconcilable claims of object and subject, of extraversion and introversion.

Is this true? Here is Jung's description of fantasy: "It is an especial characteristic of fantasy that it is essentially involuntary and stands

[6] This clarifies, I think, the place of erudition in the Jungian corpus.

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inherently opposed to conscious contents," having qualities of "strangeness and spontaneity" in common with the dream. The truth is, Jung has brought back one member of the old duality, unreason, with a new name. It is no synthesis at all, but only the latest version of the war against rationality that has been prosecuted, with rising hysteria, by literary intellectuals and humanists in a culture they no longer understand. The Jungian theory proposes to every disaffected humanist his "personal myth," as a sanctuary against the modern world. Against the argumentative democracy of intelligence, Jungian theory proposes a therapeutic aristocracy of feeling.

WHAT EXACTLY is this "creative impulse" which Jung sets up as the highest activity of man? On first glance, one would think it is merely a new term for *art*; but actually Jung implies something much more general, public as well as private. What Jung means by fantasy is, in a word: *illusion*. Here perhaps is the essential difference between Freud and Jung. All the romantics had united in noticing—Nietzsche's is perhaps the most famous formulation—that only an illusory history, or an illusory religion, or an illusory politics, could lead humans to a therapy of commitment.

Freud came to disillusion humans; to rob them of their "erotic illusions" is to render inoperative all the classical therapies. It was Jung's mission, in exact opposition, to state the intellectual condition under which one might reinstate any and all therapies of commitment, at least as a private adventure in historical fantasy construction. Social life, eased and enriched by this esoteric anti-science, would require even more numerous erotic illusions; there would be more material satisfactions to go around, because the "spiritual" satisfactions would grow more important. What the consolations of religions and philosophies were through the long ages of scarcity, the luxury of psychology would be in the age of affluence. More than ever before, then, both the high culture and the individual sense of well-being depended, for their very existence, on erotic illusions. If old illusions no longer functioned satisfactorily, then they must be replaced by "something new." Jung dedicated his life to the production of something new in the way of saving illusions. Under the stimulus of this essential disagreement with Freud, Jung wrote his most lucid single essay, an historical account of Freud's importance and limitations.

WE MUST NOT, Jung tells us, take Freud's analytic attitude too seriously. He was exposing only a special kind of illusion, a bad kind of illusion; he had nothing to say about illusion itself.

> Freud is an exponent of the *resentment* of the incoming century against the nineteenth, with its illusions, its hypocrisy, its half-ignorance, its false, overwrought feelings, its shallow morality, its artificial, sapless religiosity, and its lamentable taste.

Freud is the "great destroyer who breaks the chains of the past." He exposed rotten habits and sentimental frauds, noble sons and devoted daughters, holy motherhood and exemplary fathers. The 19th century was an illusory time. The church had become a mortuary, mistaken for a museum. Freud would immunise the future against illusion. There would be no more over-valuations. Papa would no longer play god, and mother was not a virgin. The son would cease to feel Christ-like and settle down to his carpentry. This clearing away of stale pieties was Freud's historical mission: he had served his purpose.

Yet, by clearing away stale pieties, Freud prepared the way for the reinstatement of pieties that were more durable, more ancient. Jung despised the fundamental "unspirituality" implied by Freud's suspicious treatment of the dynamics of the unconscious. Just there, in the unconscious, are those superior illusions that would compensate mankind for the barren interdicts of Christianity and the almost equally barren interdicts of psychoanalysis. For Jung, the illusions enforced by culture were the bad illusions; they were neither spontaneous nor unique. Instead, Jung thought the deeper sources of illusion were primordial and creative, unconscious not rationalising, and mainly antimoral, remissive rather than controlling. Indeed, Jung's confession announces a religion of remission, to help end the failing historic religion of control.

Just these remissive impulses (or images) were the "religious" foundations of culture. The higher truth became a kind of personal faithfulness to primordial fantasies which, far from internalising parental authority, emancipate man from them, thus releasing the distinctively human faculty—the "creative impulse." Religious history is a chronicle of this creative impulse. Psychotherapy is, at best, the discovery and encouragement of this impulse. Thus artistry and religiosity are identical in their origins.

JUNG'S PRIVATE MYTH stirs no social trouble. This modern form of quietism is a powerful answer to the question of how to live in the modern world. It is also an answer that denies, in prin-

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ciple, any significant social responsibility. Jung seeks less to transform the modern world than to avoid it—or, better, to create an enclave of invulnerable privacy able to withstand its bureaucratic organisations. Inside his private myth, the individual can safely claim to discharge catholic obligations. In the ritual of dream and fantasy he gains membership in the great invisible church of common meanings. A socially and politically inconsequential symbolic universe is thus reconstituted; that this is the essentially religious task of analytic psychology means that religion, as understood by Jung, has retreated from political society and becomes the intimate mode of achieving a sense of well-being. He himself speaks of the "tranquil composure" achieved when life becomes "cosmologically meaningful." By this general integration into a symbolic universe, the individual achieves the predicate of his personal integration. From such personal integrations all salvations are derived. Alienation from the stable personifications that are the Unconscious means perdition—or mental illness. An entire set of functional equivalences to social religion are quite deliberately used by Jung. He has supplied a complete parody of Christianity, stopping short at his own "Christification," as the public prophet of a private religion—this to avoid the martyrdom suffered by both Christ and Nietzsche, public spokesmen for private religion in their own times.

In order to avoid martyrdom, Jung delayed announcing his full membership in the confraternity of prophets until after his death, in the posthumous publication of his autobiography, which is at once his religious testament and his science best stated as a personal confession. It is, indeed, a great confession, precisely for these connections. Jung saw that the social sciences could not be analytic without being, at the same time, the stuff of which belief systems are made. He set out to make a belief system of psychology. He failed, I think, but there is a lesson in his failure: that the symbols of psychological analysis, if they are intellectually compelling, themselves risk becoming a language of faith.

Crossing a Desert

This truck puts an end to dreams.
How we arrive in great cities,
Simply by wishing on their names:

Bassora, Isfahan, casting a spell
On our senses, a coppery bell

Of their syllables. Or watch all night,
Awake to simpler needs;
Reluctant to invade the waste land
When all the leave-taking is over,
The image out of hand.

Up here the din is unmistakable: Life,
Aimed out of the silent shadows,
Along its own path: a track
Into the last rays of the sun, the meadows

Of dust. Desert: a burnt-out patch
Beyond the reaches of the soul, which
I am no less
Drawn to for its emptiness.

(Always something seething there,
Thrust of cactus, twist of tare.)

I understand what tempts these horses
Into the distance and out of sight.
There is nothing to steal them from their horizon.
Nothing to scale their flight.

My own eyes sometimes panic with their hooves,
Like prisoners let out of caves.

And after all, it is fear. A scampering
For the burrow. I can only cross
This wilderness because I know
That it is part of a return. That long ago
I made the outward journey in a dream.

Hugo Williams

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NOTES & TOPICS

C. S. Lewis

MOST DONS, like most schoolmasters, are more or less conscious "characters." Their lives are lived in the gaze of numerous watchful young eyes, and their ordinary human traits are discussed and commented on by eager young tongues until they become magnified into lovable or laughable idiosyncrasies. Student generations succeed each other so rapidly that by the time a don has been in his post for a mere fifteen years or so, his pupils are being asked by people who seem to them middle-aged, "Is old So-and-so still as such-and-such as ever?" In time, even the most retiring don becomes a legend; his face and voice, walk and gestures, are studied far more intimately than those of a merely public figure such as a politician. For the don is semi-private. He "belongs to" the university at which he works. His activities are watched and criticised by an audience who feel themselves personally insulted if he does something they don't like, personally complimented if they approve.

For this reason every don is equipped with a *persona*, a set of public characteristics which in time he finds it hard to lay aside even in privacy. After all, the politician who sets up an image simple enough to be adopted by cartoonists, or the "maverick" man of letters who aims to capture the attention of journalists and TV interviewers, need only construct a scarecrow with some faint resemblance to himself. But the don's image is tested and scrutinised by alert twenty-year-old eyes, half-a-dozen times a day, in the privacy of his study fireside. It has to be lifelike. It must *very nearly* approximate to his real character: the mask must have *almost* the same play of expression as the face beneath it. So that the don who makes an impact on the wider scene (Gilbert Murray, F. R. Leavis) or becomes a star performer in a mass medium (C. M. Joad, A. J. P. Taylor) starts with a big advantage over the cruder performer from Westminster or Fleet Street. Such men are like Dickens characters. We know they are not real, that no human being was ever quite like that; but we cannot deny that they are true to a certain kind of "nature."

C. S. Lewis was a rare case of the don who is forced into the limelight by the demands of his own conscience. He had a secure academic reputation before beginning that series of popular theological works which made him world-famous; I believe he would never have bothered to court the mass public at all had he not seen it as his duty to defend the Christian faith, to which he became a convert in early adult life, against the hostility or indifference that surrounded it. Many of his Oxford acquaintances never forgave him for a book like *The Screwtape Letters*, with its knock-down arguments, its obvious ironies, its journalistic facility. But Lewis used to quote with approval General Booth's remark to Kipling: "Young man, if I could win one soul for God by—by playing the tambourine with my toes, I'd do it." Lewis did plenty of playing the tambourine with his toes, to the distress of some of the refined souls by whom he was surrounded at Oxford. He had a naturally rhetorical streak in him which made it a pleasure to cultivate the arts of winning people's attention and assent.

Lewis' father was a lawyer, and the first thing that strikes one on opening any of his books is that he is always persuading, always arguing a case. If he wrote a book or essay about an author, the assumption was that he had accepted a brief to defend that author. It was his duty to bring the jury round to his point of view by advancing whatever argument would be likely to carry weight with them. It is this, more than anything else, that gives his literary criticism its curious impersonality. We feel that Lewis is simply not interested in telling us what it was that first made him, Lewis, a devotee of Spenser or Milton or William Morris. He consistently attacked what he called "the personal heresy," and despised the *argumentum ad hominem*. To him, every important issue lay in the domain of public debate. Whether it was the choice of a book to read or the choice of a God to believe in, Lewis argued the matter like a counsel. His personal motives were kept well back from the reach of curious eyes. All was forensic; the jury were to be won over and that was all.

FOR THIS REASON the parts of Lewis' work that are most disappointing are those that ought to be personal and aren't. He wrote a great deal about Christian belief, and liked to begin his discourse with, "When I was an atheist...." But the personal revelation was entirely mechanical; the former Lewis had taken a generalised atheistic position, the present-day Lewis took a generalised Christian position. So that when his autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, appeared in 1955, many people turned eagerly to the account of his own conversion, hoping at last to have a glimpse of the personal reasons behind it, the reasons that counted for something in the silence of his own heart. The result was disappointment. The account is as lame and unconvincing as it could possibly be. All one brings away from it is the fact that it occurred at Whipsnade.

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This inability to share his inner life is of course no disgrace to Lewis. We have suffered too much in this century from men and women who rush in, proffering their souls on a tin plate, eager to button-hole us and "tell all"; and then, in most cases, making up a pack of lies. Lewis would have been too honest to follow their example. And on the rare occasions when some kind of personal element was needed—in his work or in his relationships with people—what held him back was not lack of honesty but simply a deep-seated inhibition which he could not break.

Everyone who knew Lewis was aware of this strange dichotomy. The outer self—brisk, challenging, argumentative, full of an overwhelming physical energy and confidence—covered an inner self as tender and as well-hidden as a crab's. One simply never got near him. It was an easy matter to become an acquaintance, for he was gregarious and enjoyed matching his mind against all comers. And if he liked what he saw of you, it was easy to go further and become a friend—invited to visit him at Magdalen and enjoy many hours of wide-ranging conversation. But the territory was clearly marked. You were made free of a certain area—the scholarly, debating, skirmishing area which the whole world knew. Beyond that, there was a heavily protected inner self which no one ever saw. No one? Doubtless there were a few, here and there; two or three friends of forty years' standing, who were of his own generation and shared his Christianity; the wife he married late in life; possibly a few blood-relations. But if anyone ever really knew his inner mind, the secret was well kept.

IF ANYONE DOUBTS THIS, let him take a look at the book Lewis wrote about the experience of having to endure his wife's death and the subsequent religious and philosophical turmoil of his thoughts. It was published by Faber & Faber in 1961 as *A Grief Observed*, by "N. W. Clerk." ("N. W." was Lewis's signature for the clever pieces of light verse he was at one time in the habit of contributing to *Punch*; it stands for "nat whilc"—more correctly, I think, "hwilc"—which is Anglo-Saxon for "I know not whom.") This book, evidently composed with a great deal of care as a refuge from grief and a monument to love, is just as impersonal, as non-intimate, as anything signed by Lewis. One gets no impression of the living presence of a real woman. I don't mean only that we are not told whether she was tall or short, fat or thin. (Though even *that* would have helped.) The want is subtler. A palpable human presence is there, but it is the presence of a mind; it has no heartbeat or smell or weight. Characteristically, we are given a description of her mind; it was "lithe and quick and muscular as a leopard. Passion, tenderness, and pain were all unable to disarm it." Beyond that, nothing. Not that the book fails to take us into a human situation. Its notes on the psychology of grief are interesting and valuable. But what we see is generalised grief, not one particular man's. It is what Johnson desiderated for literature, a "just representation of general nature."

What caused this withdrawal, this inner timidity, I do not know. I could make a clumsy, amateur effort to psycho-analyse Lewis, but my findings could not be of any clinical value, and in any case I shrink from any such probings; I liked and admired the man, and if he wanted his inner self left alone I think we should leave it alone. I mention the matter only because it is one of the keys to the work he has left us. In his writings Lewis adopts a strongly marked role, for the reasons I gave at the beginning. But this role is a wooden dummy. It bears the individual features of no living man. Lewis grew up in the Edwardian age and his chief allegiances were to that age. He became a Fellow of Magdalen in 1925 and from then on it was easy for him to ignore the modern world; the interior of an Oxford college has probably changed less since Edwardian days than anywhere, always excepting the House of Commons. And even before he got his Fellowship, he had noticed the 1920s only to draw away from them in hostile dissent. From about 1914 onwards, he disliked modern literature because it reflected modern life.

This withdrawal from the age he lived in went easily hand in hand with Lewis' impersonality in human contacts, his construction of a vast system of intellectual outworks to protect the deeply-hidden core of his personality. As time went on, and the younger people he met began to seem more and more Martian (as they do to all of us, goodness knows), Lewis deliberately adopted the role of a survival. He was "Old Western Man," his attitudes dating from before Freud, before modern art or poetry, before the machine even. When, in 1954, he left Oxford for Cambridge, he introduced himself to his new audience in this role.

> You don't want to be lectured on Neanderthal Man by a Neanderthaler, still less on dinosaurs by a dinosaur. And yet, is that the whole story? If a live dinosaur dragged its slow length into the laboratory, would we not all look back as we fled? What a chance to know at last how it really moved and looked and smelled and what noises it made! And if the Neanderthaler could talk, then, though his lecturing technique might leave much to be desired, should we not almost cer-

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> tainly learn from him some things about him which the best modern anthropologist could never have told us? He would tell us without knowing he was telling.

Hence:

> Speaking not only for myself but for all other Old Western men whom you may meet, I would say, use your specimens while you can. There are not going to be many more dinosaurs.

Such a public application of the grease-paint did him, I believe, no good among the stern, no-nonsense men of Cambridge, who have no time for play-acting. And it must be admitted that there is an element of disabling unreality about the striking of such an attitude. A man born in 1850 might naturally inhabit an older "order"; a man born, as Lewis was, in 1898 could only reconstruct it from boyhood memories and adult reading. Lewis, who was twenty-four in the year that saw the publication of *The Waste Land*, couldn't claim to belong to a generation whose taste in poetry, for instance, was formed before Eliot "came along." His true role was not that of either "Old Western Man" or a dinosaur, but the humbler and more commonplace role of *laudator temporis acti*.

Once this has been grasped, the all-pervading contentiousness of Lewis' writing becomes more explicable. He was fighting a perpetual rear-guard action in defence of an army that had long since marched away. In some respects this may be a valuable thing to do; to be "modern" and up-to-date is not necessarily a good quality —many of the most appalling people have it. On the other hand, Lewis' parallel about the dinosaur creeping into the laboratory is an unhelpful over-simplification. Lectures given by an Elizabethan critic on Shakespeare would be very illuminating, but only to scholars who already understood the main points of 16th-century thought, and wanted clarification on the finer shades. To interpret the masterpieces of one age to the young of another, we need such understanding as we can muster of both ages. As Allen Tate has remarked, "The scholar who tells us that he understands Dryden but makes nothing of Yeats or Hopkins is telling us that he does not understand Dryden." What Lewis was actually doing, most of the time, was interpreting the past in terms of the Chesterbelloc era as he reconstructed that era in his own mind.

Thus we find him, in an after-dinner speech on Scott (*They Asked for a Paper*, pp. 98–99), admitting the charge that Scott often turned out work that he knew to be inferior and was quite happy as long as it sold. "There is little sign, even in his best days, of a serious and costly determination to make each novel as good in its own kind as he could make it. And at the end, when he is writing to pay off his debts, his attitude to his work is, by some standards, scandalous and cynical." And Lewis goes on:

> Here we come to an irreducible opposition between Scott's view of the world and that of our more influential modern men of letters. These would blame him for disobeying his artistic conscience; Scott would have said he was obeying his conscience. He knew only one kind of conscience. It told him that a man must pay his debts if he possibly could. The idea that some supposed obligation to write good novels could override this plain, universal demand of honesty would have seemed to him the most pitiful subterfuge of vanity and idleness. . . .
>
> Two different worlds here clash. And who am I to judge between them? It may be, as Curtius has said, that "the modern world immeasurably overvalues art." Or it may be that the modern world is right and that all previous ages have greatly erred in making art, as they did, subordinate to life, so that artists worked to teach virtue, to adorn a city, to solemnise feasts and marriages, to please a patron, or to amuse the people.

The point is gracefully made; but that list of the possible motives for art in the traditional society simply breaks down when we try to apply it to Shakespeare, or Michelangelo, or Beethoven. (Or is Beethoven already corrupted by modernity?) And whatever Curtius may have meant by his remark, do we in the 20th century actually *feel* that we live in an age that "overvalues" art, or values it at all, for that matter? But how characteristically skilful of Lewis to bring up a big gun in defence of a weak point!

It is early days yet for a final estimate of Lewis' work, but I think the general view, ultimately, will be that his writing improves as it gets further from the popular and demagogic. Thus, in a miscellany like *They Asked for a Paper*, the weaker pieces are those in which he could assume an audience less intelligent than himself (*e.g.*, the English Association lecture on Kipling, or the banquet speech about Scott), and the best those in which he addressed himself to some problem before fully qualified people (*e.g.*, the very original and acute "Is Theology Poetry?"). Setting aside his novels, which I take it are simply bad—he developed in later years a tell-tale interest in science fiction, which is usually a reliable sign of imaginative bankruptcy —I think I would put his *Reflections on the Psalms* at the bottom of the scale, and at the top his contribution to the "Oxford History of English Literature," *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century*. The "psalms" volume is frankly popular, addressed to the average

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A SURVEY *inquiring into what the Gallup Institute called "The International Satisfaction Index" covered opinion on nine areas of personal concern in seven countries.*

	Satisfied	*Dissatisfied*
Switzerland	79%	14%
Denmark	72	16
Norway	70	17
U.S.A.	**65**	**30**
W. Germany	63	24
Britain	**56**	**32**
France	53	27

Averages were taken across all the seven countries to see where the Western systems have come nearest to satisfying popular expectation:

	Satisfied	*Dissatisfied*
Work	81%	9%
Housing	74	22
Leisure	71	23
Living standards	71	22
Education	65	15
Future prospects	64	18
Family income	61	32
Position of own country	58	23
Honesty	43	41

Non-material discontents loom largest of all, that is, concern with standards of honesty and behaviour, and dissatisfaction with the position held by one's own country in the world to-day. Behind these lie all the problems of human relationships and social purpose, of people isolated in distrust and mutual reproach one from another, weak community feeling, uncertainty of purpose and deficient national self-confidence.

These social discontents are strongest in Britain and America, but, with the possible exception of Norway, are apparent everywhere.

NATIONAL *self-confidence, satisfaction with "the position of one's own country in the world to-day," is highest in Switzerland, lowest in Britain.*

Three in every four of the Swiss, the Germans, and the Norwegians, are satisfied with the part played by their countries. In each of these three countries, the level of national self-confidence is more than twice what it is in Britain.

The two English-speaking countries, Britain and the United States, are the only countries where the dissatisfied outnumber the satisfied.

The French, with 38 per cent undecided, are the most uncertain of all the peoples on this issue. But of those who have a decided opinion in France, the satisfied outnumber the dissatisfied by two to one.

National self-confidence is, therefore, higher in: (a) the smaller countries, Switzerland, Norway, and Denmark, than in the larger countries, Germany, France, U.S.A., and Britain; (b) the non-nuclear countries, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, and Denmark, than in the nuclear countries, America, France, and Britain.

1. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the position of your own country in the world today?"

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	58%	23%	19%
Switzerland	79	10	11
W. Germany	72	12	16
Norway	72	17	11
Denmark	60	11	29
U.S.A.	**43**	**45**	**12**
France	42	20	38
Britain	**34**	**48**	**18**

2. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with your housing situation?"

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	74%	22%	4%
Switzerland	83	15	2
Norway	78	16	6
Denmark	77	19	4
U.S.A.	**72**	**25**	**3**
France	71	24	5
W. Germany	71	26	3
Britain	**67**	**27**	**6**

3. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with your family income?"

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	61%	32%	7%
Switzerland	74	22	4
Denmark	73	21	6
U.S.A.	**64**	**34**	**2**
Norway	62	25	13
W. Germany	59	35	6
Britain	**49**	**42**	**9**
France	45	42	13

It is, perhaps, significant, that the countries most satisfied with the work they do are the countries most satisfied with the incomes they get from it.

4. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the work you do?"

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	81%	9%	10%
Switzerland	92	5	3
Denmark	86	4	10
U.S.A.	**85**	**10**	**5**
W. Germany	78	13	9
Norway	77	10	13
Britain	**73**	**10**	**17**
France	73	11	16

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5. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with your children's education?" (If childless: "the education children are getting today?")

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	65%	15%	20%
Denmark	77	9	14
Switzerland	76	9	15
France	67	14	19
U.S.A.	**66**	**27**	**7**
W. Germany	62	14	24
Britain	**60**	**22**	**18**
Norway	50	11	39

6. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the amount of leisure and free time you get to yourself?"

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	71%	23 %	6%
Switzerland	79	17	4
Denmark	78	17	5
U.S.A.	**76**	**22**	**2**
Norway	72	21	7
W. Germany	67	27	6
Britain	**66**	**29**	**5**
France	56	31	13

A cheerful view of the future is more likely to be found in (a) the smaller countries, Switzerland, Denmark, and Norway, average 75 per cent satisfied, than in the four larger countries, U.S.A., Britain, France, and Germany, average 56 per cent; (b) the four non-nuclear countries, average 72 per cent satisfied, than in the three nuclear powers, U.S.A., Britain, and France, average 55 per cent.

Of the seven nations, the British are easily the most dissatisfied with the prospects before them. One in every three in Britain takes a gloomy view of the future.

The French are not so dismal as the British, but they are even more uncertain. France is, in fact, the only country where the confident are outspoken by the combined voices of uncertainty and foreboding.

7. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the future facing you and your family?"

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	64%	18%	18%
Switzerland	80	8	12
Denmark	73	6	21
Norway	72	16	12
U.S.A.	**64**	**24**	**12**
W. Germany	62	18	20
Britain	**54**	**33**	**13**
France	45	22	33

8. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the standards of living of yourself and your family?"

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	71%	22%	7%
Switzerland	88	9	3
Denmark	82	10	8
U.S.A.	**77**	**22**	**1**
Norway	75	16	9
W. Germany	68	24	8
Britain	**60**	**34**	**6**
France	48	38	14

In only two out of the seven countries, Norway and Switzerland, are the majority of people satisfied with the honesty and standards of behaviour of their fellow countrymen.

The Germans and the Americans are the most self-critical. In both countries the majority, 51 per cent in Germany and 58 per cent in the U.S.A., complain about present standards.

9. "On the whole, would you say that you are satisfied of dissatisfied with the honesty and standards of behaviour of people in this country today?"

	Satisfied	*Dis-satisfied*	*Don't know*
Consensus	43%	41%	16%
Norway	69	20	11
Switzerland	56	31	13
Britain	**41**	**47**	**12**
Denmark	40	43	17
France	34	39	27
U.S.A.	**34**	**58**	**8**
W. Germany	28	51	21

The discontented are substantial minorities numbered in their millions, even on material issues. For example, the international queue for higher incomes in the seven countries is over 80 millions long; the queue for better housing over 50 millions long.

To satisfy man's material needs scarcely diminishes his appetite. Even in Switzerland, the country most satisfied with its living standards with only 9 per cent complaining about them, nearly one in every four demand that more should be added.

The British, 48 per cent, and the Americans, 45 per cent, are much concerned with their country's position in the world to-day. This lack of national self-confidence is not, however, shared to any appreciable extent by the Germans, 12 per cent only.

GALLUP INTERNATIONAL (*London*)

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Christian who would like to use the psalms as an aid to piety but is put off by certain features that baffle or repel him. Lewis goes at these great poems like a hard-worked C. of E. parson making Sunday morning sermons out of them; making hardly any attempt to deal with their quality as poetry, he draws simple moral and devotional lessons from them, and often falls into that detestably hard, almost menacing tone which dogs his weaker writings. I mean, for example, the chapter on "Connivance," where he argues that the Christian ought not to associate with people who behave in an un-Christian fashion, ought not to give them the benefit of his company and conversation. And Lewis goes on to regret the good old days when people who didn't toe the line of Christian morality were made to feel their guilt by various bits of bullying:

> It may be asked whether that state of society in which rascality undergoes no social penalty is a healthy one; whether we should not be a happier country if certain important people were pariahs as the hangman once was—blackballed at every club, dropped by every acquaintance, and liable to the print of riding-crop or fingers across the face if they were ever bold enough to speak to a respectable woman.

When Lewis got into his silly-truculent mood, his historical sense always failed him; surely it is obvious that the adulterer or horse-doper in 1850 was in a better position than his modern counterpart, since the hideous weapons of the gutter press and the flashlight camera did not exist to be used on him. What price Profumo? Riding-crops weren't in it.

It is true that Lewis immediately adds, "To this question I do not know the answer." But there is in this passage, as in some of the diatribes of Screwtape—so unfortunately licensed by the presiding "irony"—a flavour of eagerness, something suspiciously like relish.

At the other extreme, his "Oxford History" volume is a model. Here, where too intrusive a personality would be fatal, Lewis has just the right amount of idiosyncrasy, combined with that wonderful intellectual vitality and zest. Time after time he performs the feat of writing about some deservedly forgotten book, or some crabbed controversy among the theologians of the Reformation, in a way that makes one follow him with a real eagerness. Not by gimmicks or Chestertonian antics: simply by that keen—almost fierce—pleasure in debate and exposition which made him such a great teacher. It would be a pity if this fine book were never to be read by any but literary students, for it is many things in one. There are passages of pure exposition, examples of how to set out a complex question with economy and lucidity, which ought to be studied by everyone who has to use his mind for a living; *e.g.*, the brilliant and rapid sketch of Renaissance poetics at the beginning of the chapter "Sidney and Spenser." Or thumb-nail portraits of key characters in the story, such as the beautiful miniature of King James IV of Scotland (on pp. 66–67). There is, likewise, a fine humility in the book. Lewis, unlike so many dazzling stars of the "Eng. Lit." business, is not too proud to get down and do some of the dull, slogging work involved in the academic study of the subject—making a bibliography, looking up endless dates, all the long vistas of headaches and inky fingers.

That humility is crystallised for me in a personal reminiscence. As he worked on the book—and it took nine years—Lewis showed various chapters in typescript to friends who might advise him. I got, for some reason, "The Close of the Middle Ages in Scotland." I read it with nothing but admiration; I knew nothing of most of the writers mentioned in it, but his account made them seem attractive. I laid it on his desk, on one of my visits to him, without comment; and a year or two later, when the book came out, he complained half-comically, "I never got any criticism of that chapter I gave you." It was like his humility to bring work of that quality, so deeply pondered and so brilliantly written, to an insignificant young man in his twenties, completely unknown then in the world of letters, and ask quite genuinely for "criticism." God rest him; "gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche."

John Wain

Bombshell

Readers of Encounter will scarcely need a resumé of the plot of *Dr. Strangelove*. For this has been widely resumed in every type of periodical; and by now some of them may even have seen the film itself. They may, indeed, have escaped this by the luck of knowing friends who have been to it (as I write, a left-wing novelist rings up to warn me against going; alas, I had already seen a preview).

But he did give me some information which you can't get at a preview—that in spite of widespread descriptions of the film as "hilari-

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ous" and "reducing one to helpless guffaws of black laughter," the audience, when he went, watched in almost complete silence. This shows, I take it, that there is a difference between film critics and the rest of us. Without saddening ourselves by naming British slip-ups—and to be fair, these were fewer than those on the other side—we may look incredulously at *Time* ("outrageously brilliant satire"), *The New Yorker*, and others. Even a respectable and literate journal like the *New York Review of Books* raves a bit.

I would not go as far as my friend in denying all quality to Mr. Kubrick's production. But what quality there is is professional, technical. Whenever it ventures on anything remotely resembling an idea, it is simply worthless. Film critics are doubtless, as we should hope and expect, skilled in appreciating and discussing their subject as a craft. Evidently, they are not so good at political and other thought. It is an area in which one could hardly expect them to claim special insight. But, perhaps because they have thirsted in vain for ideas over a long period, many of them have become intoxicated at the first sip of a shot of rotten old hooch.

For the ideas are in every conceivable respect second-rate, mob-sucking, lacking in penetration—lacking even in interest in such penetration. What is dramatised, and gimmicked, in this film is simply vague anti-war feeling. The feeling itself is wholly reputable, but the failure to develop it rationally is wholly contemptible. (This is not a question of agreeing or disagreeing with an opinion. There are clear-headed and sensible men of all opinions, left and right, unilateralists and multilateralists.)

It is a curious thought that at one time the correct holier-than-thou attitude was to accuse multilateralists of not being *serious* enough about nuclear weapons. Now, if we do not go into fits of laughter over *Dr. Strangelove* we will doubtless be accused of not treating the bomb with sufficient humour. You can imagine what accusations of "bad taste" would have gone up if even a trace of a joke had crept into a film about atomic warfare made from the opposite point of view! Nor will the defence that this is "basically" a tragic farce do. For a curious thing is that it does not show the horrors of war at all. There is more actual catharsis in the average cowboy film.

As is common with the *genre*, there are a number of factual errors and internal inconsistencies. The feeling seems to be that a higher purpose exempts you from paying attention to this sort of thing. In the thoroughly, and unjustifiably, immodest hand-out for the show, we are told that the director has read large numbers of books about nuclear war, and has enjoyed consultation with such bodies as The British Institute for Strategic Studies. The letter to *The Times* (January 31st, 1964) from the head of the latter organisation, Mr. Alastair Buchan, says (in words which should be repeated wherever the film is taken seriously): "I gave him a copy of the novel [*Red Alert*, on which the film is based] as one instance of how the subject had been treated in fiction, but warned him that parts of it were quite implausible.... The basis of the plot [of *Dr. Strangelove*] is a series of distortions even of the known facts about American control and safety procedures." Why then does Mr. Kubrick imply the opposite? One can only think that, for his presumed audience of semi-literate hicks, he is indulging in the same custom as those earlier entertainers who pinned to the tent of some Middle West State Fair their claims to have appeared before all the crowned heads of Europe.

The whole of the Washington side of the film is ruined because Mr. Kubrick, instead of apt caricatures, peoples the Pentagon with pure grotesques. One amiable "progressive" film columnist wrote of the scene in the War Room that everything was fine except that the Russian ambassador was unfortunately a caricature. He was indeed. She did not seem to note that to make the head of the American Air Force a stupid and noisy schoolboy, and the President's chief scientific adviser a half-crazy, not-so-ex-Nazi, is also a departure from realism. For these are mere projections of a tedious New York-Hollywood liberal feud.

The Pentagon is a large and rather hideous building. Yet it is not the Pentacle it has been made to appear by keen fantasy addicts—a symbol and locus to which evil spirits happily flock. One enters without a pass, with less formality than would be required at our Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries. Though it doubtless contains its share of unlikeable persons, like every other institution from M.G.M. to C.N.D., the crazy or moronic generals and scientists who allegedly populate its Caligari corridors are phantasms of half-baked brooding. In Mr. David Rees' recent book on the Korean War, we can see the Pentagon in action, coping subtly and moderately with a most complex military-political situation. Think for a moment of Mr. Kubrick, and compare him, let us say, with General Maxwell Taylor....

This film falls to pieces even on its own ground at every possible opportunity. Its serious intent is, one would suppose, to show that there is a danger that an accidental or unintended attack would start an atomic war. However, in the film a bomber does get through, and drops one bomb. But this does ***not*** start an atomic

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war. It causes the automatic explosion of a non-existent device designed by the Russians to destroy all life on earth. Kahn did, it is true, once say that such a device could be constructed. It was to explode a number of cobalt bombs when a computer in charge received certain information. He never satisfactorily explained how it could be made possible to cut off the information from the computer, and with that the idea falls to the ground. He said, anyhow, that it would take a very long time and cost ten billion dollars; the Russians are here shown as building it because they cannot afford other weapons. But, more important, Kahn, speaking for himself only, was conducting a frightening but unreal intellectual exercise. There is nothing in Soviet (or, of course, American) political or military thinking that would not instantly reject such a notion. The idea, in fact, is a fictional one, and to call up an imaginary danger isn't exactly the right way to make us face real dangers. The man who cries "Wolf!" may or may not be believed. But the man who cries "Three-headed fire-breathing dragon!" will be generally felt not even to have made out a *prima facie* case.

But the whole smug claim to be teaching everybody is misplaced. Few people are so lacking in imagination as not by now to have a reasonable idea of the horrors of atomic warfare. Few politicians and generals—except perhaps in Peking—fail to understand that we must not have such a war. When a man in the entertainment industry, or indeed anywhere else, comes along and says in effect: "I am more sensitive than you—I am cleverer than you—you are a clod and a clot—and it's my duty to reform you. But, for such as you, appeals to reason and good sense would be wasted—I must therefore stoop to trickery and gimmickry to give you some glimmering of my own vision," he is merely handing out a silly insult. Any lack of sensitivity and of sense is to be sought in the man who takes such an attitude, rather than in the masses he purports to enlighten.

IT IS ONE OF THE MARKS of our culture, not only in film production, that the man who has the skill to produce a good unpretentious work of art instead inflates it with notions and gimmicks pointless in themselves and in any case outside his scope. The potential lyricist or novelist can get more attention by stuffing his pages with grandiose and pointless symbolisms, and *kitsch* originalities. The dramatist substitutes verbalised screams for the spoken word; or puts characters into dustbins; or claims significance through third-hand and misunderstood social messages. All such people could have wrought better, even if they could not have attracted attention better. There is often a bit of misused talent somewhere at the bottom of the ambitious nonsense.

And Stanley Kubrick certainly has technical gifts—if only he could divert his logorrhea of ideas, like a deluge of tepid dishwater, into other channels—conversation, perhaps, or articles for some West Coast periodical. I should dearly like to see a good gangland film of his, or even an attempt at some serious straight script like *Hedda Gabler*. But, unfortunately, he is likely to be encouraged by the effect he has had on the like-minded, or rather like-psyched, to continue in this vein. It is a waste of time, of money, and also I think, to some degree, of talent too.

For about a fifth of it is relieved by oases of straight filming. The actual technical effects, the drills and procedure aboard the H-bombers and so on, are very effective. There is a professionalism, an inducement to the suspension of disbelief. The mad general who launches his Wing at Russia was also a triumph, just the level of ludicrous tragedy which the film was evidently aiming at; though even here, with an unerring touch, the director contrives one piece of vulgarisation—a low-grade Freudian flourish to categorise and trivialise what could have been left as a grand mania needing no explanation (just as at the end even the mad scientist loses his natural concentration in order to fuss about how many women he will get when the survivors descend into the mines).

Having said all this, I don't feel that we need worry too much about the effect of *Dr. Strangelove*. Some commentators have been outraged at its "gross anti-American effect." But I can't see it doing much damage. Those who agree with its general points already will be fortified in their delusions—or else made to feel what fools they've been. The public, or such of them as choose to go to it, are not the dull-witted propaganda-fodder that many intellectuals and leaders of opinion, right and left, seem to believe them to be. They will see the fantasy element as fantasy, and at worst will go away with the feeling that the atomic weapon is a dangerous thing—a view already shared by everybody anyhow.

Robert Conquest

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Golding's Spire

By P. N. Furbank

WILLIAM GOLDING's novels tend to use some simple-minded literary ancestor as their starting-point. He made it quite clear that he intended Ballantyne's *Coral Island* to be borne in mind as a frame of reference for *Lord of the Flies*; and he seems unconsciously to have done the same again with a novel by "Taffrail" called *Pincher Martin*, in which another British sailor (in the first World War) has his ship torpedoed, struggles with his heavy sea-boots in the water and is only just saved from "the jaws of death." (There is also, I think, some dependence on Kipling's *Just-So Stories* in *The Inheritors*.) The earlier novels, with their simple and false ideology, provide a jumping-off point, inviting him to turn them upside down in the light of his own special vision of original sin. Jack, Ralph, and Piggy emphatically do *not* put on a "good show" like Ballantyne's Jack, Ralph, and Peterkin Gay; and Golding's Pincher Martin, unlike his predecessor, is a very unwilling hero.

If there was a starting-point of this kind for Golding's new novel, it may perhaps have been J. Meade Falkner's *The Nebuly Coat*, a novel overshadowed, somewhat like Golding's, by a tottering minster tower. Dean Jocelin in *The Spire** has been told in a vision to raise a spire on his cathedral. The foundations aren't deep enough for it and the pillars of the crossing weren't built to carry it; so he must carry it himself, by his own will and faith, in the teeth of bitter opposition from his mason and the Chapter. As the novel opens (it is apparently set in the 14th century) Jocelin is wandering about the cathedral in a state of manic joy and excitement, loving and blessing everything and everyone his eyes rest on. This gleeful, bubbling hyper-excitation of Jocelin's, growing fiercer and consuming him totally as the scaffolding rises, is the keynote of the novel, giving it the same sort of sustained crescendo as drives through *Pincher Martin*.

It is made clear from the start that the spire is a phallic symbol:

> The model was like a man lying on his back. The nave was his legs placed together, the transepts on either side were his arms outspread. The choir was his body; and the Lady Chapel where now the services would be held, was his head. And now also, springing, projecting, bursting, erupting from the heart of the building, there was its crown and majesty, the new spire.

And very soon it is also plain that Jocelin's state of mind, and the vision itself, represent imperfect sexual sublimation ("... the purpose of the building seemed concentrated in the funnel over the crossways"). And by the time of the final chapters, when Jocelin has forced the spire up by the sheer pressure on others of his libidinal energy, and has destroyed himself, and three other people, in doing so, he is beginning to recognise what his real motives have been. As he lies dying, his chaplain Father Adam quotes to him the thinly-veiled sexual language he had once used in his diary:

> For there, against the sky, I saw the nearest pinnacle; and it was the exact image of my prayer in stone. There was the uprush, the ornamentation of sidethoughts for others, then the rush of the heart, rising, narrowing, piercing—and at the top, still carved in stone, the thing I had felt as a flame of fire.

Father Adam comments, "They never taught you to pray?" and proceeds to teach him to do so, beginning at the beginning. "And my prayer, Father? My vision?" "Your prayer was a good prayer certainly; but not very," replies Father Adam gently.

In *The Nebuly Coat* a Gothic tower has been built on Norman arches not designed to carry one, and owing to the stupid complacency of the rector in charge it is allowed to fall. Jocelin's spire stands—for the moment. Golding evidently means it as a symbol for civilisation itself. Only in this way, probably, could it ever have been built. And of course it will fall one

* *The Spire*. By WILLIAM GOLDING. Faber, 18s.

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day, when there is a high wind; but then that is in the nature of spires. "It hasn't fallen yet, Roger," says Jocelin. "Father Adam told me so. He said it would fall some day even if we'd built it of adamant and anchored it to the roots of the earth."

APART FROM ONE superlative scene, Golding's last novel, *Free Fall*, was pretty much of a failure. The new one is masterly, I am glad to say: a splendid success, if not an unqualified one—which none of his novels have been since *Lord of the Flies*. It is proper that Golding should take ingenuous extrovert novels as his jumping-off point, since temperamentally he's an extrovert himself. He is interested in things, and how things are done. He is determined, fanatically determined, to make us see. Unless you submit yourself to following Pincher Martin's struggle for survival, as a technical exercise described in minute, practical, Crusoe-esque detail, you will be bored. And the same is true of *The Spire*. You live with this building-operation as intimately as if it were a "Hornblower" novel or one of those Kipling stories about machinery. This is a great strength in Golding—and an absolutely essential one here, of course, since the hero sweats with every stone and joist as if he were putting it personally into place. The prose communicates Jocelin's apocalyptic experience by its impassioned precision of technical detail. And at the high points of technical crisis you see just how masterly this prose, and the narrative handling, can be; for instance, in the great scene in chapter four. The mason in charge has dug a pit in the cathedral floor to inspect the foundations:

> Then, as Jocelin looked, he saw a pebble drop with two clods of earth; and immediately a patch perhaps a yard square fell out of the side below him and struck the bottom with a soft thud. The pebbles that fell with it lay shining dully in the reflected light, and settled themselves in their new bed. But as he watched them and waited for them to settle, the hair rose on the nape of his neck; for they never settled completely. He saw one stir, as with a sudden restlessness; and then he saw that they were all moving more or less, with a slow stirring, like the stirring of grubs. The earth was moving under the grubs, urging them this way and that, like porridge coming to the boil in a pot; and the grubs were made to crawl by it, as dust will crawl on the head of a tapped drum.

The hair rises on our own necks at this point. It is one of Golding's most authentic and marvellous triumphs, working at every level of meaning. He has never found a better symbol than this seething hell-mouth for his vision of the underside of civilisation.

Where the book is sometimes weak, as so often with Golding, is in presenting human relationships. There is some inhibition which prevents him from handling any but adolescent or pre-adolescent relationships freely—which is why *Lord of the Flies* is still his one perfect novel. Being the immensely intelligent man he is, he looks for ways of getting round the obstacle; and to a good extent he succeeds in *The Spire*. You begin by blinking at the 20th-century Anglican flavour he has given his 14th-century scene—people talking of things as being "a great joy" or discussing "the quality of living"; that "medieval" use of Christian names which is so very modern-Anglican ("Things aren't as easy as that. They cost us more than that, Roger"). Then you see the point; this whole uneasy style of Anglican manners is being used as an expression of the falsity of Jocelin's own human relationships—which is one of the things he has to be made to realise, and an essential feature of the plot.

When it comes to the sexual imbroglio, however, it is another matter. Try as he will, when it comes to actual sexual relationships, Golding always sounds the note of Anglican bravado (the using of strong language to overcome embarrassment). Some animus against sex hamstrings him as an artist at these points. In *The Spire* Jocelin is haunted by his suppressed desire for his "daughter in God," the sacristan's wife; her red hair obsesses him. He knows he has connived at marrying her off to an impotent husband so as to keep her safely by him. He pretends to think he is literally bewitched, but finally accepts the simpler, 20th-century answer.

> He looked up experimentally to see if at this late hour the witchcraft had left him; and there was a tangle of hair, blazing among the stars; and the great club of his spire lifted towards it. That's all, he thought, that's the explanation if I had time. . . .

This works as a pattern; but the actual presentation of the white-skinned Goody Pangall and Jocelin's lust for her never comes to life.

Golding doesn't repeat himself, but his novels are shot through with recurring patterns. Pincher Martin is not only cast up on a desert isle like the boys in *Lord of the Flies*; he also, like them, creates his own deity on the high places of the island. He evolves a whole imaginary rocky island out of a decayed tooth in his mouth, as the hero of *Free Fall* creates a complete system of torture, and a whole eschatology, out of wet floorcloth in his darkened cell. Pincher Martin finally recognises himself (it is an old belief that meeting yourself is a portent of approaching death) in the guise of a crusta-

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cean, as Jocelin sees his own maddened reflection on a polished sheet of metal. I have the feeling that the most characteristic, and perhaps the deepest, pattern of all in Golding's mind is one about lying helpless and broken-backed, perhaps in water, retracing one's past existence or foresuffering judgment. Bits of this nexus occur in all the novels, including the new one. Jocelin, when his breakdown begins, "would be aware of a feeling rising in him, coming up towards the chest like a level of dark water." In the end he deliberately hurls himself down on the stone flags and breaks his back; his purgation begins as he lies helpless and supine in bed. It is worth noticing that the one really powerful poem in Golding's *Poems* of 1934, a sonnet about Baudelaire, also draws on this pattern:

> *... Like a tormented corpse foretasting hell*
> *He lay eternities stretched out, and stark.*
> *Swore like a mangy parrot till he fell*
> *Into the stinking limbo of the dark.*

Fate of the Public Schools

By David Watt

ARE THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS due for the chop at last? It's not an unreasonable question at this moment. Generations of left-wing activists have been telling us that these institutions are the bastions of class-consciousness, snobbery, and inefficiency; and generations of public school men (mostly, though not by any means all, Conservative) have informed us that they are the backbone of the country. In an election contest which is supposed to be about the modernisation of Britain—and particularly of education—one might have expected that the issue would be the centre of violent party controversy. In a year, moreover, in which a leading Conservative Minister admitted publicly that he had refused to serve at least partly on the grounds that the Prime Minister had been chosen by "a small circle of Etonians," the Opposition might have seized a chance. Nothing of the sort has happened. The Labour Party merely announce that they will "integrate the schools with the state system"—which may mean in practice almost anything from a move towards some mild form of Direct Grant boarding schools, to a complete and almost instant take-over following diversion to other kinds of education. The Conservatives present us with the pious thought that "parents have the right to spend their money on the education of their children if they choose"; but they do not appear ready to lift a controversial finger in defence of this principle.

The reason for this rather coy political truce is not simply that about half of the likely Labour Cabinet went to public schools or sent their sons there; nor, for that matter, has a Conservative Cabinet containing nine Etonians and twelve other public school men had a sudden rush of egalitarian conscience. The trouble is, most probably, that neither side wants to upset the floating voter. One of the Labour Party's major achievements under Mr. Harold Wilson has been to win back at least the suspended disbelief of the professional middle classes, and this is not to be recklessly allowed to subside into distrust again. The Conservatives, for their part, are well aware that it would need only about two words in defence of the public schools from them to send their reluctant ex-member of "Pop," ex-peer, cricketer and poacher-catcher slithering over a precipice of farce, and the Party after him.

This seems a sad commentary on the present initiative of the political parties, but it's also a pity for all of us, for the whole public schools controversy badly needs revivifying. At this moment political pussyfooting has sidetracked it (as it has often been sidetracked before) into a question of "value for money."

The recent report of *Where?* has passed sentence:

> If a parent lives in a large town, there is a good chance that his local grammar school will be academically equal to the average public school and a good deal better than many.... It is far better if in doubt to stick to the state system from the beginning than be faced with the choice of changing a child's school perhaps at a critical stage, or subjecting the family budget to intolerable strain....

This kind of judgment, logically impeccable as it is, is balm to the gradualist reformer. He can from now on relax in the belief that if the state system is academically as sound as the private and if we democratise the admissions

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system at Oxbridge and stop the tax loopholes through which doting grandparents are able to pour money for the education of the next generation but one, nobody can either need or afford to send his child to a public school. Unfortunately the headmaster of Bloxham (whose school came bottom of the *Where?* league table for A-level passes) gave the game away in his annoyance: "There's more," he said indignantly, "to education than passing examinations." Tom Brown's father made the same observation on the eve of his son's departure for Rugby. "I don't care a straw for Greek particles or the digamma; no more does his mother.... If he'll only turn out a brave, helpful, truth-telling Englishman and a Christian, that's all I want." And one hundred and thirty years later Mr. Peregrine Worsthorne, writing in the *Sunday Telegraph*, remarked "I should like my son to go to a public school less because it would help him get into Oxford and Cambridge than because it would help him stay out of the Aldermaston march and suchlike follies." Mr. Worsthorne's idiom is a little different from the Squire's but I suspect he means much the same.

A *Daily Mail* survey carried out a few years ago showed that in a sample of ex-public school products asked to say what they had got for their money, 37% said "social advantage," 29% said "more self-confidence," 14% said "career advantage," 6% said "leadership," 14% picked other qualities (including, presumably intellectual prowess). In short, so long as people think they can gain some or all of these advantages and "the manners of an English gentleman" many of them will continue to scrape and save to send their sons to a boarding school where the proper indoctrination can take place rather than a day grammar school where it might not be effective or a state school where the advantages simply do not exist. It would apparently matter little to them if the school taught but raffia work and tatting.

What is clearly needed for these people is another *Where?* league table showing the number of gentlemen turned out per 100 boys (with Bloxham triumphantly at the top, and Ampleforth at the bottom). This brings us to Mr. Wilkinson's book,[1] *The Prefects*, for it is to this work that the compilers of such a table would undoubtedly have to refer. What Mr. Wilkinson has done is to describe in immense detail the ethos of the Victorian public school in its heyday. He has isolated all the main virtues that were implanted and made to flower on what was often extremely stony soil. Self-control as shown in the character of the "good loser" and the man who doesn't show off. Loyalty and co-operation demonstrated in the house and team spirit. "Style," fostered by hallowed customs and rituals. Flexibility epitomised in the amateur ideal and a curriculum which avoided a single useful item of expertise. Responsibility inculcated by the prefect system.

I WISH Mr. Wilkinson had had more fun with all this. He could have made some hilarious and valid points with those glumly uplifting school songs and even with mottoes (*"vincit qui patitur," "clarior ex ignibus," "aut vincere aut mori,"* and so on). And what about the school story? Dean Farrar and later Talbot Baines Reed and especially G. A. Henty were illuminating because they carried the spirit to the point of caricature. Take the hero of *With Roberts to Pretoria*, one Yorke Pemberton, aged 16—"a typical public schoolboy, straight, and clean-limbed, free from all awkwardness, bright in expression and possessed of a large amount of self-possession or, as he himself would have called it, 'cheek,' was a little particular about the set of his Eton jacket and trousers and the appearance of his boots; as hard as nails and almost tireless; a good specimen of the class by which Britain has been built up, her colonies formed and her battlefields won." *The Prefects* describes his type with a good deal less brevity and vividness.

Nevertheless Mr. Wilkinson is good and salutary, because the system he describes as it existed in the 1880s and '90s is so little changed. Here, for instance, are two passages from the recent book[2] on Marlborough written by a group of the boys.

> On the whole it is the conscientious and efficient organiser, who is full of house spirit, has a strong character and personality as well as a good games record, who is normally made a prefect.... Non-games-playing prefects do exist ... but they are very much in the minority... partly because the right sort of person with a forceful personality tends to project it into games, but it is also tied up with the fact that games are the basis of all house spirit, the force which is considered essential for the welfare of a house as a united co-operative body....
>
> The insignia of [prefectorial] office, white tie and coloured waistcoat or sweater, plus all the ceremonial of sidesmanship in Chapel and the prefect's table in hall help to emphasise this fact: that they are the chosen apostles of the Master....

All Mr. Wilkinson's ingredients are still there and all the utensils for mixing them—house spirit, games, ceremonial, tradition, authority. Yet Marlborough at present is known

[1] *The Prefects*. By Rupert Wilkinson. Oxford University Press, 35s.
[2] *Marlborough*. Kenneth Mason.

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as one of the most "modern" public schools with no fagging, little beating, a well-known progressive headmaster, and (to judge from the book) licence for a healthy dose of scepticism. There are, however, many more traditional schools, as anyone will appreciate who heard the unearthly howl of an Eton fag-call resounding round the ornate eaves of the St. Martin's Theatre during the recent performances of Mr. David Benedictus' play *The Fourth of June* and witnessed on the same stage the ritual brutalities of an Eton Library playing with its victims. In most essentials, at any rate in character-building, it seems that Eton, by reason of arrogance, and the smallest public schools, by reason of desperate traditionalism, have remained pretty well unchanged for eighty years.

And why should they change, one might ask. What is wrong with loyalty and responsibility and self-control and flexibility, that we should despise them or wish to alter the institutions which foster them? The reason for doubt lies not in the qualities themselves so much as the fact that experience, amply illustrated by Mr. Wilkinson, shows that they can be too dearly bought. Even eighty years ago the public schools had distinct defects as "leadership courses." They did their job historically all right, tapping the middle classes for talent, making Victorian society more homogeneous than it would otherwise have been, and keeping alive some sense of values in the highly competitive and materialistic Victorian world. But they achieved this, in effect, by a series of brainwashing operations for which a high price had to be paid in terms of emotional growth and creative capacity. The famous report received by Peter Ustinov at Westminster—"he shows great originality which must be curbed at all costs"—is a bit of a freak but not all that much. Originality at a public school is unsettling because it implies, if carried beyond a very limited distance, that the individual is prepared to put himself before society and to defy it—the unforgivable sin.

If, as is often said about them, the Victorian public schools had merely been producing empire-fodder—endless Indian Army subalterns and inhabitants of cantonment houses in a thousand parts of the globe—it might not have mattered so much (except for the wretched victims who must have been frequently bored to death). But they were also producing the central direction of the Empire, and it was here that the incapacity to imagine and foresee changes and to seize and use the imagination of others had disastrous effects in a world

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which changed as fast as ours has in eighty years. The mandarin class in China, with which Mr. Wilkinson makes a long and elaborate comparison, was to this extent in a better situation in that its members could look back over the precedents of 1,000 years and be sure of finding something more or less relevant. The public school leader has had to meet an appallingly bewildering world in which almost no precedents ever fully apply and in which Thucydides and Livy and Tacitus do not provide an adequate general guide. He has often failed disastrously. The products of the public schools in their heyday (*i.e.*, from the late 1860s to 1900) were the Generals who tried to fight the Boer War with the methods of the Crimean and the First World War with the methods of the Boer War. They were the politicians who failed to prevent the slaughter in the trenches, and in the next generation failed to react to Hitler as a tragically new phenomenon. The period was illuminated by occasional flashes of genius which not even the public schools could extinguish—Churchill was at Harrow, Keynes at Eton, William Temple at Rugby—but the picture as a whole is one of appalling unimaginative failure at the top.

When one criticises the present Government and its predecessors on these lines one is, of course, criticising the public schools, vintage 1920–30. But with the exception of Harold Macmillan (an earlier vintage), who did show considerable imagination in some fields, it is difficult to say that this generation has shown that things have changed. It is worth remarking in passing how entirely dominated the Tory Party still is by the public school ethos. In the constituencies non-public school men come in all the time from the Young Conservatives but the important offices still go mainly to public-school types with traditional public school ideas. In Parliament, there is a generation of non-public school Tories who came in via the war-time services but they are, as a class, rather regretted (especially at the moment). Of the 22 Tories who voted against the resale prices bill only five were from the big public schools while the persistent Tory rebels—the men who "rock the boat" and to whom "loyalty" is not the overmastering virtue—are hardly at all from the traditional background. The Labour Party, which consists either of non-public school men or rogue intellectuals like Mr. Crossman, are even more difficult to whip in.

And what will the youngest generation from the public schools be like, assuming there is no reform? The book on Marlborough confirms such enquiries as I have made from present or recent public schoolboys and leads me to think that this batch will not be much different from the others. They may be better educated in the sense that they have a wider syllabus and better laboratory and library facilities; they may even be less brainwashed by discipline, herded less often on to the rugger field, and more at ease with the opposite sex. But boarding-school life among a group of boys who are there because their parents are rich is bound to be an inbred existence, cut off from the outside world and its real problems and guaranteed to build up the pressures to social conformity and caste prejudice.

Most of such people cannot be allowed to become "leaders" in any real sense because the country cannot afford to staff its senior civil service, its Parliament, its industry, and its professions with characters who are by background and training so totally unaware of the feelings, reactions, and problems of the people they are supposed to be leading—the gap between the executive and the subject is wide enough even without a class barrier.

It is frequently said that the public schools have lost their *raison d'être* now that the "Imperial spirit" is dead. This is perfectly true—without the Empire the public schools have become, as someone remarked, a code without a creed. But that is only half the story. The fact is that up to the last war the Empire provided an infinite number of openings for the less-than-brilliant public schoolboy. The Home Civil and the I.C.S. would be above him, but the Army, Colonial Police Forces, District Officerships lay ready and waiting for Yorke Pemberton. Now he and his friends are a drug on the home market. Ten thousand or so leave public school every year. Half (to be generous) reach a university. Another quarter are taken by Sandhurst or squeezed into the family firm or bought a place in the city. But the rest must try to impress industrial personnel managers and medical school registrars and heads of chartered accountant firms. Since it may be years before these boys lose their marginal snob-appeal it may be years before the best candidate has the best chance.

I have already argued that nothing will stop parents buying their children an education if it brings advantages like these. The choices before the reformer is therefore restricted. He can keep the boarding-school concept and therefore, almost inevitably, keep the idea of an élite (though he may enlarge the élite's catchment area and its humanity by making it open to a wider range of entrants). This would have the blessing of precedent since the original public schools achieved a very similar advance over previous systems; but it is doubtful whether the deep prejudice against boarding-schools among the working-class entrants that are wanted could

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be overcome. The alternative is to turn the schools into something entirely different, bearing in mind that their geographical position makes them virtually useless for day-student use.

The Conservative Party has naturally no intention of reforming the system. Why should it when its own values and even its existence are at stake? Nevertheless it would be pleasant to think that the Labour Party was really prepared to grasp the nettle. It might even be interesting to know what Mr. Wilkinson, after so much study, would propose himself.

Gombrich's Hobby Horse

Meditations on a Hobby Horse, and Other Essays on the Theory of Art. By E. H. Gombrich. *Phaidon Press,* 37s. 6d.

"The use I propose to make of the analysis of communication . . . is not to explain art, but to criticise certain assumptions about art." To appropriate this from *Meditations on a Hobby Horse* as a fair description of the book would be ridiculously to underestimate its achievement. (For one thing, its subject-matter extends far beyond the application of communication theory.) Nevertheless, the sentence quoted serves as a useful pointer to Professor Gombrich's method. As in his previous book, *Art and Illusion,* received notions in aesthetics—the opposition of "seeing" and "knowing," the concept of art as the language of the emotions, the "spirit of the age," the "will to form"—are held up to scrutiny, refined upon, modified and, if necessary, dismissed. Here, as there, a cool, highly rational intelligence is directed towards areas where normally pretentiousness and sentimentality reign. We find the same width of reference, the same ability to employ methods of analysis and argument developed in philosophy, psychology and science—not to mention the history of art—to correct ideas evolved within aesthetics itself. In the writing there is the same lively sense of curiosity and charm. Composed as essays on themes related to, and to some extent occurring in, *Art and Illusion*—though there is a difference of emphasis—*Meditations on a Hobby Horse* is a no less brilliant and fascinating book.

It is also, like *Art and Illusion,* a more difficult one than it looks at first sight. I don't mean by this that its style is obscure or jargon-ridden, still less that it is hard to read; on the contrary, it is hard to put down. Nor does any great

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difficulty arise, I think, from the originality of the ideas as such, for these are expressed clearly enough. "Neither communication nor expression can function in a void"—"All art is image-making and all image-making is rooted in the creation of substitutes"—"The *genre* (still life) may often be said to come first, the emotion afterwards." The text abounds in such epigrams, which can be understood out of context. Yet Professor Gombrich's meaning can hardly be said to reside in these phrases alone, for they are not "conclusions" to an argument in the ordinary sense but only, so to speak, the outstanding features of an intellectual landscape which, to be appreciated, must be explored in full. Each essay is, moreover, a crossing of the same, or nearly the same, landscape only from a different point. The result is that the ideas which recur do so under different lights, in different orders and with varying degrees of emphasis. This is not to say that the nominal topics discussed are no more than pretexts, that they are not genuine problems to which the ideas may be fruitfully applied. But while great precision and subtlety of thought are achieved by this approach, they are achieved at the cost of making the argument difficult, if not impossible, to paraphrase. In my view this is certainly not a fault. But it does lead one into the curious position of feeling one has understood Professor Gombrich without being able to produce, in one's own words, a summary of what he has said.

Whereas in *Art and Illusion* he had mainly dealt with problems of visual perception, the emphasis here lies on two themes which have more to do with the appreciation of works of art than their creation: abstraction and expression. Expression receives the more detailed treatment of the two and it is considered chiefly in its "natural" or "symptomatic" sense—as when we say that such and such a form or work of art is the expression of "the artist's state of mind" or of "the spirit of the age." Both these issues are subjected to equally sharp analysis by Professor Gombrich. It is not so much that abstraction cannot be art—though he comes close to saying this—or that a work of art cannot be expressive of the state of mind of the artist who created it (in an absolute sense it cannot be anything else), but that such concepts are dangerous if not positively useless in aesthetics because of an inevitable failure in communication. Expressionist theory, we are told, assumes that "forms or tones are analogues of feelings and will therefore convey a specific emotional experience." A natural resonance is said to be established between the form and the observer (provided he is sensitive enough), so that his response to the form will correspond to the emotion expressed in it by the artist. It is this assumption that Professor Gombrich demolishes once and for all, and demolishes with the most powerful weapon in his armoury: the use of communication theory. In the essay entitled "Expression and Communication," which I find the most stimulating in the book, he quotes Professor Colin Cherry:

> Signals do not convey information as railway trucks carry coal. Rather we should say: signals have an information content by virtue of their *potential for making selections*. Signals operate upon the alternatives forming the recipients' doubt. They give power to discriminate amongst or select from these alternatives.

In other words, the interpretation of expression in art requires extrinsic clues; we need a frame of reference, a standard of comparison, a context, before we can read the message or even feel sure that a message has been sent. Is the expression on the face of a Gothic figure an attempt by the sculptor to render an emotion supposed to be felt by the figure ("symbolic" as distinct from "symptomatic" expression)? Is this expression to be explained in terms of the medieval artist's tendency to imitate the forms, and hence the expressions, of other Gothic

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figures? Or is it an authentic expression of the artist's state of mind? We are not, of course, completely at a loss in the face of these alternatives because, for example, comparison with other figures of the period enables us to measure the degree of deviation or individuality in any given case. But we are still left with the near-impossibility of choosing between alternatives one and three. We still don't know how far to regard the common expression on the faces of all figures of the same date as an expression of the spirit of the age. And we have no clues, outside the work itself, to the state of mind the sculptor was in at the time, or what sort of person he was, or any other information about him that could be relevant to our problem. It is interesting to notice that Professor Gombrich was already beginning to explore this kind of question in the earliest essay in this book (originally published in 1937) at a time well before the science of communication analysis had developed the sophisticated tools that are now in use.

Elsewhere in the chapter on "Expression and Communication," the expressive possibilities of colours and sounds are submitted to a similar close analysis. A canvas painted a uniform blue can only express the artist's "blues" if he tells us so—by putting a frame round it and giving it a title. Unstructured blue is meaningless in isolation; it only makes sense in terms of expressiveness when there is a choice between alternatives; where, that is to say, the observer responds to the blue because he is aware that in the given context other colours might have been chosen instead. Within the limits of intelligibility (too wide a choice may be as confusingly unhelpful as no choice at all), the degree to which expression of this sort can successfully be interpreted depends on the precision with which the alternatives are presented. Other aspects of the problem discussed here include the modification of a "primary" signal by a secondary one, the mechanism by which surprise operates in art, and the adaptation of these ideas not only to the visual arts but to music. Again and again Professor Gombrich returns to this theme. In the chapter on "Physiognomic Perception": "Without some framework against which to test and modify our first impressions, we are left to the tender mercies of our initial projections." In "Psycho-Analysis and the History of Art": "If the work of art has the character of a shared dream, it becomes urgent to specify more clearly what it is that is being shared." In "Expression and Communication" (speaking of a great masterpiece rather than a demonstration model): "If we are really to re-

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'It's happened—a woman who can be funny about sex' wrote Malcolm Muggeridge in the London Evening Standard, and we are happy to report that Mary McCarthy's 'brilliantly contrived, extremely funny and totally adult book' (Cyril Connolly in the Sunday Times) is still bestselling five months after publication, is now reprinted for the sixth time, and is to be made into a film by Charles K. Feldman Productions Inc.

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ceive its 'message,' we cannot do without all the contextual clues the historian can unearth." Finally, readers of *Art and Illusion* will not need to be reminded how often the idea of a message as "an instruction to select" turns up in that book in the context of problems in perception.

MENTION OF THE historian prompts the hope that Professor Gombrich's example will be followed more often than it has been so far in art history proper. (It is ironical, in view of his well-known antipathy to abstract painting, that *Art and Illusion* has caught on far more successfully in art schools than among art historians in this country.) It is tempting to suggest ways in which an extension of his method might be applied: to the paradox of portraiture, for example. Almost from the beginning, it has been the aim of the portrait painter to render not only the outward likeness of a sitter but the sitter's character, his "very self." And we can fairly take it on trust that some portrait painters have succeeded in doing this, even though their rendering is bound to be more or less subjective: what the painter thought of his sitter, not the sitter "as he really was." But it is important to remember that we, unlike the sitter's contemporaries, can *only* take it on trust. However much we may praise Rembrandt's psychological insight, it is not an insight that we can share. Despite some sixty self-portraits, do we even know what Rembrandt thought of himself? But if we had some contemporary written information, how different the situation would be! *Then* we could use that information to begin to read the self-portraits in a meaningful sense. The information, the clues, would act as "instructions to select" from among the countless hints and suggestions in that astonishing (or commonplace?) face. Goya might well be another subject for this kind of enquiry. There should be less talk about his satirical attitude to the Spanish Royal Family until every scrap of written evidence bearing on what he thought about them has been sifted. Is his pictorial treatment really so much at variance with the respectful tone of his letters that we can safely dismiss the letters as insincere and the portraits as the "true" image of what he thought? Perhaps. But our idea of Goya as a portrait painter depends on a careful answer to this question.

NO THEORY OF ART worth having can be all-inclusive. If it tries to be it falls, like attempts at all-inclusive definitions of poetry, into phrases so vague as to be meaningless for practical purposes. Professor Gombrich's theory is no exception. To evaluate it properly one would have to consider the questions it half-conceals, takes for granted or omits, as well as those it brings into the full light of day: among the omissions —the role of imagination, of genius, the grounds (as distinct from the vocabulary) on which judgments of value may be based. One half-concealed question is worth mentioning, partly because the allusions to it are so brief that it may get overlooked, partly because I think it requires more attention than Professor Gombrich gives it. After watching, fascinated, while he shreds the assumptions of Expressionist aesthetics into ever more minute pieces, it is a shock to find something suspiciously like emotionalism being let in after all: "Granted that a great work of art is so rich in structure that it remains potent even when misunderstood . . . ," and again, though with a more precise account of the point where reason stops and emotion takes over, at the end of the review of Malraux. This is not a plea to Professor Gombrich to make reason the answer to all our difficulties in aesthetics. But the oblique way in which this problem is touched on is of a piece with his failure, as I see it, to show more convincingly than he does why a *Birth of Venus* by the 19th-century *Salon* painter, Bougereau, is a bad work of art.

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I agree with Professor Gombrich, however, in wishing to see the domain of reason extended. More, I rejoice to share most of the convictions, humanly motivated and passionately held, on which this book is based—convictions that may be summed up as an abhorrence of Hegelianism in all its forms. I only wish that his distrust of abstract art wasn't tinged, as I think it is, by similar non-rational considerations. On this subject I am on the side of his critics; but the critics have dealt with that thoroughly enough. I enjoyed *Meditations on a Hobby Horse* more than I can easily say.

Michael Kitson

Contemporaries

Tradition and Dream. The English and American Novel from the Twenties to Our Time. By WALTER ALLEN. *Phoenix House*, 30s.

LIKE ITS PREDECESSOR *The English Novel*, Walter Allen's study of the English and American novel since the 'twenties is now the best book of its kind. The kind itself we tend to mutter about, more suspicious of the popularising of culture than of science or history. Admittedly always in danger of becoming a glorified library-list, but then what is the matter with a library-list? If a book of this sort seems less use when it arrives at very recent fiction, that is mainly because there the reviews are still ringing in our ears and we already know whether or not we want to read so-and-so. For the 'twenties to the 'forties, Mr. Allen performs a straightforward task (reminding us which books matter), all the better done for this straightforwardness. The fact that to-day the most influential reviews are in magazines which we soon throw away (as they were not in the 19th century) makes such reminders even more important. Mr. Allen, modest, would agree that no claims should be pitched in the form "One cannot imagine such a book being better done." Except in a work of perfected scholarship or of great critical originality, it will always be possible to imagine a book similar but better. *Tradition and Dream* could have done with a less even tenor. But where is a better survey of the contemporary novel?

Very wide reading and very wide sympathies are enhanced by a lucid shrewdness. Mr. Allen is at his best when he thinks a writer simply ought to be read: say, May Sinclair, Stephen Hudson, or Robert Cantwell. He argues that

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the novel should be more afraid of inanition (transcendental symbolising) than of literalism (grubby journalism), so he makes a good champion for Dreiser, and he asks some sharp questions about William Golding. Why for *Lord of the Flies'* sake should we agree that the behaviour of children is a paradigm of general behaviour? Not that this need be simply "a considerable confidence-trick" on Golding's part; rather, a moral-cum-religious premise which is tacitly withheld from inspection and which isn't enforced for those who don't begin by sharing it. But Mr. Allen is certainly effective with such asides. On the recurring theme of what it means to be an American: "it often seems to have narrowed down to the consideration of what it means to be a Southerner." On Virginia Woolf's illuminations:

> Sometimes they don't amount to much more than a series of short, sharp feminine gasps of ecstasy, an impression intensified by Virginia Woolf's use of the semi-colon where the comma is ordinarily used.

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CASSELL

A pity that Mr. Allen is unavoidably in such a hurry. *A propos* Aldous Huxley, what exactly *is* "literary coprophilia"? Is there necessarily any equivalent in literature for behaviour in life? Does the metaphor really say more than that Huxley is not to Mr. Allen's taste? Again, he might have lingered over Elizabeth Bowen's unfairness in *The Death of the Heart*: "On any objective valuation, the Heccombs are as morally worthy as the Quaynes: they are less sensitive, and lower in the social scale; that is all." Granted it is wrong to sneer at people for being less sensitive, but is sensitivity altogether different in kind from anything that counts as "morally worthy"? Not being sensitive may be morally regrettable, even if there is nothing to be said for trying to hurt the individual for it. One of the achievements of the novel, as in Jane Austen, has been its willingness to endure the accusation of snobbery, its insistence that there is something limited about a notion of moral worth that finds no place for sensitivity; just as the novel has contended that there is much wrong with those traditional English institutions and habits that seem designed to inure us to lack of imagination. Yet Mr. Allen is not a tendentious writer; if necessary, he would rather be accused of being dull than of being wilfully provocative. He is Horatio to Leslie Fiedler's Hamlet. Of some critical excesses, he might murmur "'Twere to consider too curiously to consider so," and like Horatio he has a point—though at times one could do with some of Hamlet's unjust corrosive flashes. But no more than the next man has he solved the literary historian's hopeless difficulty: transitions. "Pamela Hansford Johnson's views on the novel are nothing like Liddell's, yet it seems to me that...." "Another writer for whom the sensual surface of things seems to offer the greater part of experience is...." Still, these linkages do have a ruefully appealing look about them, and they are not specious—as guileless, in fact, as circus-dogs on hind-legs.

THE THEMES are two: traditions *vs.* dream, and hatred of industrial society. Neither provides a significant unity, and the book might have gained (though losing slightly as a conspectus) if it had organised all the material about one or other of them, and so given itself a chance to explore in detail and argumentatively. As it is, the argument *revolves* round them. The English preoccupation with man in society, with class and tradition, is contrasted with the American man alone, the complex fate, the American dream with its inevitable glide into fantasy and symbolism. "Symbolism seems to be the specifically American way of apprehending and rendering experience in literature." Mr.

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Allen is more valuable on this Americanism, partly because it provides a subject on which his level-headed acumen is hard to come by. "My own belief is that symbolism only works when it is integrated into the action, characters, and tone of the novel"; there are clearly advantages in coming to American fiction with this uncosmic Englishness, and Mr. Allen manages to respond to the best writing in this mode without sinking into the symbolising or mythic fatuity which could well show that *Frankenstein* and *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* are the best 19th-century fiction. His premises are not all that different from those of Martin Green in his recent *Re-appraisals*, a provocative book which unfortunately rather asked to be under-rated because of its over-aggressive cackle-cutting (sub-title: "Some Commonsense Readings in American Literature"). Mr. Allen's moderation is more likely to win friends and influence people.

Indeed he does quietly have a soft spot for symbol-hunting, so that his writing is free of the rancour which comes when a critic compounds for sins he is inclined to, by damning those he has no mind to. He concedes, in effect, that the word "symbol" is seductive; sometimes he falls. On Faulkner's Joe Christmas ("he is, to all appearances, white, but his father may have been a mulatto"), he quite rightly baulks at the author's attempt to build him up, Christ-like, as "a symbolic figure." But Mr. Allen's concession is not really reassuring: "He is, of course, one in his own right as the embodiment of the fatal rift in a culture in which a man must be either a white man or a black man and not simply a man." There "of course" is a bit easy, and the idea of being a symbolic figure "in his own right" suggests a risky extension of Tom Paine. In fact the insistence on symbolism makes the whole sentence self-warring; Joe Christmas ought to be acceptable as "simply a man," and Mr. Allen is about to follow Faulkner into setting up "a culture in which a man must be either a white man or a black man *or a symbol* and not simply a man." There is a similar moment when Mr. Allen deals too kindly with a detail in Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*: "Jake Barnes, an American newspaperman, has been castrated by a war wound: alienation, severance from the body of traditional human society, could not be expressed more radically." Radically, yes, as when Pope's Eloisa writes to Abelard:

> *Cut from the root my perished joys I see,*
> *And love's warm tide for ever stopped in thee.*

But what is radical may be over-insistent. William Empson protested against the abuses of symbolism, as in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, which without arguing thrust a role upon a man:

> Chatterley, for example, has always been spiritually impotent and you are supposed to know this from a Symbol, that he happened to become wounded in battle. Surely one knows quite well that this is an infantile type of arguing in the author, tirelessly petulant and spiteful, and not unmental in the slightest degree—as artful as a monkey, in fact.

But Mr. Allen almost always curbs this hankering, and he is suitably unimpressed by the claim that Jack Burden in *All the King's Men* "must finally bear the full *burden of knowledge*, as he is regenerated."

The novelists' hatred of modern industrial life is repeatedly mentioned but not investigated. In what ways does Lawrence's indictment differ from Orwell's? Is such a hatred by its nature related to an anti-liberal stress on "spiritual death"? Why is it on the whole rare to find these feelings in women novelists? Willa Cather lends an unusual demureness: "The space, the colour, the princely carelessness of the pioneer they would destroy and cut up into profitable bits, as the match factory splinters the primeval forest." (Her hero, and it is a pity, is called

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Forrester, and her villain Ivy.) Silliness on this theme seems unavoidable—is it really suggested that the world would be better without matches? Is the iron-lung one of the evils of industrialism? Yet the roll-call is impressive; among the haters, Mr. Allen puts Hemingway, Allen Tate, Dos Passos, Farrell—and even Holden Caulfield: "He is nauseated, indeed, by all those features of American society that make up the publicly approved face of America." These unconnected enumerations are interesting enough, but there is here undeveloped a real and important argument. Something on the lines, perhaps, of Louis Bredvold's famous study of the way in which the Augustans looked at the world, "The Gloom of the Tory Satirists."

Christopher Ricks

Philip Larkin

The Whitsun Weddings. By PHILIP LARKIN. *Faber*, 12s. 6d.

Jill. By PHILIP LARKIN. *Faber*, 21s.

SINCE 1950, or thereabouts, English poetry has been dominated by certain ideals: orderliness, restraint, exactitude, coolness, lack of affectation. The tone suits the age: within a broad spectrum of civility and decorum, groups, movements and mavericks—even lone wolves simply and actually writing poems—can lie down in peace. They read and enjoy, more or less, each other's work; they even reach a small lay audience. It is difficult to imagine an educated contemporary positively despising them, even if he doesn't much like what they write: we are all rational moderates now. But it is also difficult to imagine them shining very brightly outside this time and place, making converts rather than preaching to the converted, breaking through or breaking down the enthusiasm for barbaric splendour and vatic obscurity which will probably take its turn in the future. Only two of the men enlisted in this regiment has so far shown much promise of surviving the date when it is disbanded: Thom Gunn and Philip Larkin. Mr. Larkin's new volume confirms that promise.

Confirms, but does not extend. There are no poems here which would look out of place in *The Less Deceived*, and as that was published nine years ago one might say that Mr. Larkin was consistent to the point of being static. (As there are only 32 poems in *The Whitsun Weddings* one might add that he is reticent to the point of being stingy. Exuberant over-production is not encouraged by the prevailing canons.) Here are the same sombre flatness, the same iron intellectual grasp, the same peculiarly English relish in pin-pointing a gloomy setting. The last of these may be chiefly responsible for the comparison, sometimes invoked, with Betjeman. Mr. Larkin's observations from trains (the train window threatens to be to him what the club window was to Galsworthy) often bring in the cheapest quick returns:

> *They watched the landscape, sitting side by side*
> *—An Odeon went past, a cooling tower,*
> *And someone running up to bowl—*
>
> *I fell asleep, waking at the fumes*
> *And furnace-glares of Sheffield, where I changed,*
> *And ate an awful pie, and walked along*
> *The platform to its end....*

Betjemanesque, in the pejorative sense. So is the nostalgic daguerrotype of "At Grass," or, from this book, "MCMXIV," although at least it isn't nostalgia for childhood. For that characteristically upper-middle class vice Mr. Larkin substitutes a failing of—nothing personal intended—the mobile lower-middle: the desire to avoid putting on side by adopting a tone tougher than his temperament can keep up with. ("So what does it prove? Sod all." "Books are a load of crap.") Many others have drunk at this trough, and it now contains more mud than water. It was never very thirst-quenching anyway.

But the fact remains: Mr. Larkin is more than a nice piece of contemporary intellectual furniture. He can't write light verse at all, on the evidence of the one attempt in this book ("Naturally the Foundation will Bear your Expenses"). It would be perverse to claim that this was positively in his favour, but it is at least un-Betjemanesque. So are his recurrent themes, which are anything but trivial and decorative, and so is his exact and cerebral handling of them. To me, at any rate, quite different comparisons come to mind:

> *Living toys are something novel,*
> *But it soon wears off somehow.*
> *Fetch the shoebox, fetch the shovel—*
> Mam, we're playing funerals now.

Isn't this more like 20th-century Housman? And isn't a poem like "Next, Please"—though who, in this day and age, will take it as a compliment—20th-century Horace? Mr. Larkin's neat phrases and compact syntax weave their way in and out of his short choppy lines; at its best, this counterpointing can convey a remarkable sense of mastering a difficult subject, of

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squaring off some almost unmanageable shape. Love won't fulfil its promise to "solve, and satisfy, and set unchangeably in order," but lines like these, from "Ambulances," may do something like it:

Far
From the exchange of love to lie
Unreachable inside a room,
The traffic parts to let go by
Brings closer what is left to come
And dulls to distance all we are.

Such poems display, highly developed, that capacity to "argufy" in verse for which Dr. Davie rebuked Professor Empson. These poems are manifestly "about" something which could be described—paraphrased, even—in other less effective words. But they are the sort of arguments that are very like sensations, simultaneously visions of life and "about" visions of life; they both contain and describe those moments, usually of dissatisfaction, when our existence seems very clear and unified and also very far from what we wished or intended. If we chose it, we chose wrong; if we didn't, then we have somehow been robbed of an opportunity to choose. Either seems both terrible and significant. The tension between them comes out in two poems from *The Less Deceived*, "Poetry of Departures" and "Places, Loved Ones"; the general tone is beautifully caught in this passage from one of Larkin's novels:

> Once the break was made, as though continually-trickling sand had caused a building to slip suddenly on its foundations so that perhaps one single ornament fell to the floor, life ceased to be a confused stumbling from one illumination to another, a series of unconnected clearings in a tropical forest, and became a flat landscape, wry and rather small, with a few unforgettable landmarks somewhat resembling a stretch of fenland, where an occasional dyke or broken fence shows up for miles, and the sails of a mill turn all day long in the steady wind.

Rooms and houses can prompt these thoughts: "Home is so sad" because it shows up this side of life, "a joyous shot at how things ought to be, Long fallen wide." The young mothers in the park prompt them:

Their beauty has thickened,
Something is pushing them
To the side of their own lives.

Advertisements prompt them, "these sharply-pictured groves of how life should be":

There, dark-raftered pubs
Are filled with white-clothed ones from tennis-clubs,
And the boy puking his heart out in the Gents
Just missed them....

Time, and reflections on time ("What are days for? Days are where we live") can prompt them, though here the pontificatory note has allowed the language to thicken too.

Truly, though our element is time,
We are not suited to the long perspectives
Open at each instant of our lives.
They link us to our losses: worse,
They show us what we have as it once was,
Blindingly undiminished, just as though
By acting differently we could have kept it so.

When the true voice appears, it is unmistakable, as in the last two verses of "Mr. Bleaney," previous tenant of a glum bed-sitting room:

But if he stood and watched the frigid wind
Tousling the clouds, lay on the fusty bed
Telling himself that this was home, and grinned,
And shivered, without shaking off the dread.

That how we live measures our own nature,
And at his age having no more to show
Than one hired box should make him pretty sure
He warranted no better, I don't know.

These lonely gestures are not encouraging, for all their dignified sonority; but they seem closer to the root of the matter than many a worthy, life-enhancing snap from the connection-making poet's family album. The optimists are sophisti-

1964—psephologist's year ...

***psephology*, the new big Webster* tells us, is the scientific study of elections. It is derived from the Greek *psephos* (pebble), from the use of pebbles by the ancient Greeks in voting. Less scientific, we may discover from the same source, is *psephomancy*—divination by pebbles!**

Interesting, but not perhaps of vital interest to *Encounter* readers. On the other hand, the precise meaning of an unusual word is of vital importance in reading, speaking and listening. Such words are more likely to be found in the new big Webster* than anywhere, for it is the most up-to-date, fully comprehensive dictionary of English in print.

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cated; this emptiness born with stony elegance is the thing itself.

THE RE-ISSUE of *Jill*, prefaced by some endearing personal recollections, is a reminder of just how strongly contemporary Mr. Larkin is. Some American commentator, the preface notes, now traces that famous displaced working-class hero back to this Oxford novel of 1946. "Fair trend-spotter's comment" the author austerely allows, but not what he was really aiming at. The poor scholar from the North finds himself sharing rooms with a loud, selfish, unintelligent, public-school bloody. Overawed more than disgusted, he invents a fictitious sister at a smart boarding-school, first to impress his neighbour, then for the thriving fantasy's own sake. He projects her identity on to a girl glimpsed in a book-shop, whom he then meets; the fantasy finally crumbles in an almost Malvolio-like climax of misunderstanding and humiliation.

Mr. Larkin's sense of displacement is something more subtle and interesting than an extension of English class hostilities. (His second novel, *A Girl in Winter*, is a chillingly withdrawn portrait of a refugee from some unspecified European country working in England during the war.) And *Jill* is more than an attempt to break up the ground that *Lucky Jim* later sowed. If it weren't, it couldn't be so good. There is one passage of horseplay which might almost have been written in by Mr. Amis over the author's shoulder, but it is notably out of key with the rest. One of the most brilliant, which almost loses contact with the story altogether, is a very simple and straightforward description of the hero's return to his home town after it has suffered a sudden heavy air-raid.

Jill is very attractively written, with scenery and states of mind firmly evoked. The poems' preoccupation—our conscious attempts to construct our own lives—has its origins here, and the consequent moods and motivations generally convince. Some minor crudities are obtrusive but hardly unforgivable; Larkin was only 21 when he wrote it. But I am not sure that that American trend-spotter is really shown up as so insensitive to the book's chief merits. Mr. Larkin is quite a spotter of social niceties himself: the conversation and behaviour of his spoilt hearties is as precise and unsparing as a medical murder. So is the blunt Yorkshire scholar Whitbread, too self-reliant to be sucked into any admiration for boozy rowdies, but too pompous and blinkered to understand why others should feel differently. It is the sensitivity and escape-mechanisms of the hero that sometimes jar; he can verge on being one of Aldous Huxley's ineffective young men, writ even smaller. The greatest impact of this book comes in its first hundred pages, and it is a shock of recognition; here, once again, is the new Oxford thing itself. Others have described it more noisily than Mr. Larkin, but none before him, and none so well.

Francis Hope

Nightsong: City

Sleep well, my love, sleep well:
the harbour lights glaze over restless docks,
police cars cockroach through the tunnel streets;
from the shanties creaking iron-sheets
violence like a bug-infested rag is tossed
and fear is immanent as sound in the wind-swung bell;
the long day's anger pants from sand and rocks;
but for this breathing night at least,
my land, my love, sleep well.

Dennis Brutus

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PRESS

Writers, Editors, Politicians

Some Portraits

I HAVE KNOWN a good many well-known editors: the famous Scott of the *Manchester Guardian*, Wickham Steed of *The Times*, Massingham of the *Daily Chronicle* and *Nation*, Sir Gerald Barry of the *News Chronicle* and *Weekend Review*, Sir Bruce Richmond of *The Times Literary Supplement*, Kingsley Martin of the *New Statesman*. As professional journalists go, Clifford Sharp was not a bad editor, though he was not in the very front rank. He performed the first duty of an editor, he impressed upon his paper an indelible character, a journalistic aroma which ultimately was the personal aroma of Sharp. It pervaded every corner of the paper, every article whether signed or unsigned. The way in which a real or "good" editor pervades his paper is very remarkable; when you write for him his unseen presence broods over your pen or typewriter and unconsciously your thoughts and your words are infected by him. You become a ventriloquist's puppet. For a short time I used to write unsigned articles occasionally for Sharp in the *New Statesman* and for Massingham in the *Nation*. You could not find two men more different in temperament, style, and editorial methods, and, though, when writing for them, I was never conscious of being influenced by them, I know that my articles in the *Statesman* were in the image of Clifford Sharp and in the *Nation* in the image of H. W. Massingham. The image of Sharp was rather bleak and acrid, and to read—or write for—the *New Statesman* always seemed to me rather like sitting in a cold draughty room in which the fire was smoking a little. You might not like it; but at least the paper had a character of its own; it knew what it thought and said it in its own peculiar way—an important and by no means common journalistic merit.

Sharp ruined himself by drinking. It is curious that, though I fairly often used to go and see him at the office latish in the day, when, according to all accounts, he was usually in an obviously drunken state, I had no idea that he drank until the final disaster. Journalism is a highly dangerous profession. Among its many occupational diseases is not only drink, but a kind of fatty degeneration of the mind. Only a few very strong minded men escape the latter disease, the nemesis of successful journalism. I have practised journalism, not unsuccessfully, for 50 years and have been an editor on three different papers. In 1924 I became Literary Editor of the *Nation*, practically a full time job, though I made conditions that I would only go to the office for 2½ days a week. Its effect upon me and my mind was, I am sure, bad, and I resigned after six years, because I felt that it was destroying what mind I had. I made up what mind it had left me never again to take a full time journalistic job.

THERE ARE TWO great mental dangers in journalism. The first is most virulent among editors. It creates a kaleidoscopic, chaotic, perpetual motion rhythm of the mind. As soon as you have produced one number of your paper, you have to begin thinking of and planning the next. Your mind gets into the habit of opening and shutting at regular intervals of 24 hours or seven days like the shells of a mussel or the shutter of a camera, and everything in your mind—and indeed in your life—gets to be determined and conditioned by this interval. What you wrote for or published in last week's or yesterday's issue was written or published for a moment of time, last week or yesterday; it is now dead and forgotten and now all that concerns you is what you are publishing or writing for this week or for to-day. Your mind thus develops a curiously feverish habit of regular and ephemeral opening and shutting. You become a shell fish or a camera, but, unlike them, you soon delude yourself into thinking that the opening and shutting of your mind and the contents of the mollusc or camera are of immense importance. Nearly all good editors—like the owners of some of them, the great newspaper owners—become megalomaniacs and suffer from the hallucination that they control and exercise great power. The hallucination of power corrupts as efficiently as power.

The second occupational disease of journalism is connected closely with the first, but it affects all journalists, not merely editors. What you write for a paper you write for a moment of time, the moment being a morning or an evening, a week, a month, or three months. Whatever the length of the moment, what you

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produce is written under the shadow of ephemerality; you write it not in the mould of eternity, but for consumption with the kipper or eggs and bacon at the breakfast table or to distract someone from falling asleep in a railway carriage. There is, however, writing which is quite different from this, "serious" literature or the art of literature. Literature may be a novel or a history, an essay or a poem; it is written not with the eggs and bacon, but *sub specie aeternitatis*. It is incompatible with journalese. Of course, occasionally and accidentally a work of serious literature has got into a newspaper and nearly all modern serious writers write for the papers. But generally habitual or professional journalism destroys any ability to write literature. In the vast majority of journalists this does not matter, for they are journalists and not potentially artists. But every now and again a serious writer is destroyed or maimed by journalism.

THIS IS, I THINK, a point which has become more and more important with the enormous growth of popular journalism and of the incomes of popular journalists during my lifetime. The temptation in journalism is terrific for the young man or woman who has to earn a living and yet wants to be and perhaps might be a serious writer. "I will earn my living in Fleet Street," they think, "and write my masterpiece in the evenings and at week-ends." But newspaper offices are paved with unwritten masterpieces. If you want to write a masterpiece in the evening, the last thing you should do during the day is to write journalism or indeed to have anything to do with writing. When I was Literary Editor of the *Nation*, young men and women from Oxford and Cambridge were continually coming to me for advice; they wanted to write masterpieces, usually novels, and their idea was to earn their living by journalism or in a publishing office; they wanted me to tell them how to start. My advice was: "Don't. If you want to write a masterpiece in the evening, you have an infinitely better chance of doing so by being a cook or a gardener during the day than if you write second rate stuff or mess about with books and writing all day." I do not think that any of them took my advice or that any of them has written a masterpiece.

There is another snare and delusion in journalism for the young writer. When you write for an editor and a paper, particularly when you write what is unsigned, but even if your name appears, in a curious way you escape responsibility. This often has a very bad, if not fatal, effect upon a would-be serious writer. I am thinking of a person like Desmond MacCarthy. I was given a good dressing down by *The Times Literary Supplement* reviewer of my book *Sowing* because I wrote in it that when we were young men at Cambridge we thought of Desmond as "someone upon whom the good fairies appeared to have lavished every possible gift both of body and of mind," that he seemed to be "in the making of a writer, a novelist of the highest quality," and that "as a writer he never achieved anything at all of what he promised." The reviewer, who admittedly only met Desmond, middle-aged or elderly, entertaining aristocratic or non-aristocratic dinner tables with his entrancing conversation, says that this is complete nonsense, Desmond "surely could never have been a novelist even of passable quality, for he lacked that power of organisation demanded by the novel, and indeed by even the shortest of short stories. This was manifest in his appearance, which, in the most engaging way, suggested a dishevelled bird just fallen out of the nest." And not only did his middle-aged appearance show that he could never have written even a passable short story, "his special gift for conversation" might also have revealed it to us in 1903.

The reviewer is mistaken and he arrives at his wrong conclusion by making a number of mistakes, large and small, on the way, First, he, like many other people, is really assuming that because a thing happened it and nothing else had to happen. Because Desmond never did write a novel, he never could have written a novel. This simplifies life, history, and people, and, if it were true, it would be unnecessary to write or review biographies or autobiographies. But there is no reason to believe it to be true and his own arguments are so bad that they tell against him. Take for instance his view that because Desmond looked like a dishevelled bird it proved that he could not write a passable novel. It is true that Desmond did look like a dishevelled bird when he was middle-aged, and he knew it himself—hence his characteristic pen name Affable Hawk. But when I first saw Desmond—he was 26 and just returned from a Grand Tour of Europe—there was nothing of the dishevelled fledgling fallen from the nest about him; he looked like a superb young eagle who with one sweep of his great wing could soar to any height he chose. He not only looked it; the good fairies had lavished upon him every possible gift and particularly those gifts which every would-be writer and novelist would pray for. Why did he never fulfil his promises? Why did the splendid eagle degenerate into an affable hawk, a dishevelled fledgling? The answer is infinitely more complicated than the reviewer's superficial explanation.

One of the several reasons why Desmond

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never fulfilled his youthful aquiline promise and never wrote that brilliant novel which in 1903 lay embryonically in his mind was that he thought that he *ought* to write a novel and that novel *ought* to be absolutely first class. Desmond was in many ways Moore's favourite apostle and Desmond loved and followed Moore with the purity and intensity of the disciple devoted to the guru or sage. He, as an impressionable young man, like all of us in the Cambridge of those days, took *Principia Ethica* as a bible of conduct. The book told us what we *ought* to do and what we ought not to do, and, when one thought of those words, it was impossible not to see and hear Moore himself, the impassioned shake of his head on the emphasised words as he said: "I think one *ought* to do that," or "I think one ought *not* to do that." So when Desmond sat down to write, an invisible Moore, with the "oughts" and "ought nots," stood behind his chair. But both as a man and a writer his gifts were of a lyrical kind; they had to be given a free hand; his imagination would not work, and so he could not write on a tight, intellectual rein.

The best, said the Greeks, is the enemy of the good. The vision of the best, the ghostly echoes of *Principia Ethica*, the catechism which always begins with the terrifying words: "What exactly do you *mean* by that?" inhibited Desmond. When he wrote "seriously," he began to labour, and the more he tinkered with what he wrote the more laboured and laborious it became. This brings me back to the point from which I started, the effect of journalism upon Desmond and writers like him.

Journalism provided him with the easy way out of his difficult and complicated situation as regards writing a novel. He thought that he ought to write a novel—something serious—and as the habit grew upon him of not being able to do what he thought he ought to do, the habit of always doing something else in order to avoid what he ought to do, writing the weekly article for the *New Statesman* or *Sunday Times* became his refuge and shelter from his duty to be a great writer.

To write a book, say a novel, as a serious artist, requires a good many qualities, by no means common, besides the ability to write. However sensitive you may be to praise or blame, you have to be at some point ruthless and impervious—and ruthless to yourself. The moment comes when the writer must say to himself: "I don't care what they say about it and me; I shall publish and be damned to them." And he has to accept responsibility, the responsibility for what he has written; he must strip himself artistically naked before the public and take the icy plunge. People like Desmond, once they begin to doubt whether what they are writing is really any good—and such doubts occasionally torture practically all good writers—cannot stay the course. They cannot force themselves through those despairing moments of grind in the long distance race before you get your second wind and they cannot face responsibility. Here again journalism is the refuge. Even *Principia Ethica* would allow one to lower one's standards in the *Sunday Times* or *New Statesman*, where one is writing not *sub specie aeternitatis*, but for a short week-end. And in any case the responsibility is not so much yours as the editor's. Journalism is the opiate of the artist; eventually it poisons his mind and his art.

The Webbs

I CAME TO KNOW them, those two strange human beings, Beatrice and Sidney Webb, as well personally as anyone of my age could get to know them. Hundreds of people have poked their fun at the Webbs and they were so absurd that you could not caricature them for they were always caricaturing themselves. But behind the fantastic façade there were two human beings for whom I eventually acquired real affection. I do not think that Sidney ever felt much affection for anyone except Beatrice, but he liked me and I liked him. Beatrice, who was highly strung and neurotic, came to have a certain amount of affection for Virginia and me, and I had a real affection for her. But however long one knew them, one never got accustomed to their absurdities, to the ludicrous way in which they caricatured the Webbs. What astonished one again and again was that they were so intelligent and in many ways so quick in their perceptions and yet seemed to be quite unconscious of their own absurdities.

At lunch in Grosvenor Road and Virginia was with me—also the long lean bearded Noel Buxton, a Labour M.P. (and later a Labour peer, Lord Noel-Buxton). The conversation drifted, if conversation with the Webbs can ever accurately be said to have drifted, into the subject of education. Beatrice said that she thought it would be a good idea if Education Authorities provided for the small children in government schools sets of "municipal bricks" inscribed with the names of various organisations; in playing continually with these the children would more or less unconsciously "learn their civic duties." Beatrice was quite serious, but Virginia, who described the meal in her diary, said that "even Sidney had his mild joke at her." She also says, perhaps rather unfairly, that "Noel Buxton obsequiously offered his son for the experiment. Rich men nowadays can be

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seen divesting themselves of particles of gold with a view to the eye of the needle."

Another conversation with the Webbs (because it is the best thing which I ever heard them say). In September, 1918, we boldly, if not recklessly, asked Beatrice and Sidney to come to us for a week-end at Asham and we were rather astonished and a little dismayed when they accepted. On Sunday afternoon the Webbs, Virginia, and I went for a walk across the bridge over the river to Southease and the down above Telscombe. Even a walk with the Webbs tended to become regularised or institutionalised and organised, like the municipal bricks, and therefore on the way out I walked with Beatrice and Virginia with Sidney, and on the way back we changed partners. Sidney and I walked rather faster than the ladies and got a good way ahead of them; so we stopped on the top of a small hill just before we got to Asham and waited for them. When they came into view some distance away, Sidney said to me: "I know what she is saying to your wife; she is saying that marriage is the waste paper basket of the emotions." In the evening when we were at last alone I asked Virginia whether on the road from Southease to Asham Beatrice Webb had told her that marriage was the waste paper basket of the emotions. She said she had. As soon as Sidney and I had started off ahead of them Beatrice had asked Virginia what she intended to do now that she was married. Virginia said that she wanted to go on writing novels. Beatrice seemed to approve and warned Virginia against allowing her work to be interfered with by emotional relations. "Marriage, we always say," she said, "is the waste paper basket of the emotions." To which, just as they came to the level crossing, Virginia replied: "But wouldn't an old servant do as well?" "We were entangled," Virginia writes in her diary, "at the gates of the level-crossing when she remarked: 'Yes, I daresay an old family servant would do as well.'" Virginia continues her account of her walk with Beatrice:

> On the way up the hill she stated her position that one should wish well to all the world, but discriminate no one. According to her the differences are not great; the defects invariable; one must cultivate impersonality above all things. In old age people become of little account, she said; one speculated chiefly upon the possibility, or the impossibility, of a future life. This grey view depressed me more and more; partly I suppose from the egotistical sense of my own nothingness in her field of vision. And then we wound up with a light political gossip and chatter of reminiscences, in which Mr. and Mrs. Webb did their parts equally and so to bed; and to my horror, in came Mrs. W. early next morning to say Goodbye, and perched in all her long impersonality on the edge of my bed, looking past my stockings, drawers, and po. This has taken so long to write that we are now arrived at
> *Monday, September 23rd*
> and so many things have accumulated that I can hardly proceed to that masterly summing up of the Webbs which I intended. I had intended to dwell upon the half carping half humorously cynical view which steals into one's description of the Webbs. I had meant to point out the good qualities which come from such well kept brisk intellectual habits, how open minded they showed themselves; how completely and consistently *sensible*. . . . Their horizon is entirely clear, unless, in the case of Mrs. Webb, as the medium said, a cloud of dust surrounds them.

It should be added to complete a true picture of the Webbs, what I have rarely, if ever, seen properly recorded, that their mutual affection and devotion were unmistakably deep. When they stayed with us they brought with them all the paraphernalia for making tea, including kettle and spirit lamp. Very early in the morning, 6 o'clock I think it was, Sidney made tea in his room and carried it along to Beatrice, and he then read aloud to her until it was time to get up. And one vivid memory which I have of them is Sidney standing on the terrace at Asham, his little figure and beard silhouetted against the lovely line of downs and a flaming September sunset, explaining to us that they were in their sixties and therefore their expectation of life was now some four or five years, and "I wish," he said, "I could compound with"—here he characteristically used the correct technical insurance term—"the Almighty so that she and I would die at exactly the same moment."

Shaw

SHAW, whom I first met at the Webbs was for many years inseparably connected with them. One of the strangest things about him was that he was personally the kindest, most friendly, most charming of men, yet personally he was almost the most impersonal person I have ever known. If one met him anywhere, he would come up and greet one with what seemed to be warmth and pleasure and he would start straight away with a fountain of words scintillating with wit and humour. You might easily flatter yourself that you were the one person in Europe to whom at that moment the famous George Bernard Shaw wanted to talk, but if you happened to look into that slightly fishy, ice-blue eye of his, you got a shock. It was not looking at you; you were nowhere in its orbit; it was looking through you or over you into a distant world or universe inhabited almost entirely by G.B.S., his thoughts and feelings, fancies and phantasies.

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Writing this, I remember three more or less casual meetings with him which seem to me wonderfully characteristic. The first was at Golders Green; Virginia and I went to the cremation of H. G. Wells' wife. When we came out, Maynard and Lydia Keynes came up to speak to us. Lydia was in tears. Then Shaw came up and put his hand on Lydia's shoulder and made a kind of oration to her telling her not to cry, that death was not an event to shed tears upon. It was a kindly, even a beautiful and eloquent speech, and yet, though he knew Lydia well and certainly liked her, one felt that it was hardly addressed to this highly individual and warm-hearted woman, who had danced as Lydia Lopokova in Diaghilev's Russian Ballet and out of it into marriage with John Maynard Keynes, but rather to "someone in tears," who indeed might have been any woman in tears.

The second was in a Committee Room in the House of Commons. It was, I think, a Fabian Committee of which Webb was chairman and I was secretary. Shaw was sitting next to me; on committees he was just like the Shaw not on a committee; he loved to talk paradoxically and amusingly and at considerable length. If Webb was the chairman, G.B.S. was never allowed to get going; he was kept to the point or to silence, and it was usually to silence. On this afternoon, he had been allowed scarcely two sentences, and when the proceedings came to an end, he must have been bursting with words and ideas. He turned to the man sitting on his left, who was an M.P. and one of the dullest and stupidest men I have ever known, and began an extraordinarily brilliant and amusing monologue. I had to discuss some matter of business with Sidney Webb, who was sitting on my right, and, when I had finished, I found that Shaw's splendid display was still going on. Indeed the fireworks went on for another 5 or 10 minutes; it was superb, but I don't think that the M.P. understood, let alone appreciated, a single one of Shaw's squibs, crackers, or rockets. But it made no difference to G.B.S.; it made no difference to him whether he talked to the dummy M.P. or the cleverest man in Europe—the ice-blue eye went through or over the M.P., fixed upon the universe of G.B.S.

The third occasion was in Kensington Gardens. One fine Sunday afternoon Virginia and I went for a walk in the Park and we had just crossed from Hyde Park into Kensington Gardens and were making for the Flower Walk when we met Shaw coming from the opposite direction. He stopped and immediately began to tell us about his voyage round the world in a "luxury" liner from which he had just got back. For the next quarter of an hour or twenty minutes he stood in front of us in the characteristic G.B.S. attitude, very erect with folded arms, his beard wagging as he talked, and gave us a brilliant unflagging monologue, describing the ship, the passengers, his audiences, what he said to them, his triumphs. When the fountain of words at last died down and we parted, I found that we were the centre of a wide circle of 15 or 20 people; they had recognised Shaw and had stopped to listen to his oration as though it were a public entertainment. And it struck me then that that was just exactly what it was. Although we were fond of him and he, I think, in his curious way really liked both of us, the sparkling display to which we had just listened might just as well have been addressed to the 20 strangers gaping at him as to us.

Wells

H. G. WELLS and I got on extremely well together, and my friendship with him was very pleasant and lasted until his death, though it was broken, as friendship with H.G. often was, by interludes of storm and stress. Once after a League of Nations Union meeting, H.G. asked me to lunch at the Strand Palace Hotel, but when I met him there he whisked me off to Boulestin round the corner and I felt that he had promoted me. Over lunch he told me that he had come to the conclusion, as a result of the war and studying the League of Nations idea, that a history of the world should be written from a new angle, "plainly for the general reader." He thought it should be done to a certain extent co-operatively by a few people who looked at history and politics from the same angle. Would I co-operate? He proposed to take a room in the Central Hall once a week with the following friends: Gilbert Murray, Lionel Curtis, J. A. Spender (editor of the *Westminster Gazette*), John Hilton, William Archer, and myself. Our meetings would be entirely informal and friendly tea parties. I accepted his invitation and for some months on Wednesday afternoons we had the most enjoyable meetings. H.G.'s original idea was that we should all take our part in writing the great work and I think that he even got to the point of apportioning provisionally periods to some of us. But very soon the whole thing degenerated or blossomed into a friendly and to me most enjoyable tea and talk. The history of the world faded further and further away and we discussed everything in the world except its history. Then Wells got tired of it and told me that he was in fact writing the book on his own. I have as a memento of these many teas and talks a copy of *The Outline of History* inscribed to me by H.G.

I used to get affectionate cards from him and, when I edited the *International Review*, he very

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generously gave me *The Undying Fire* to serialise. But his temper was always uncertain for he was a terribly irritable little man, and you never knew when you might not unwittingly cause an explosion. I twice incurred his wrath. The first occasion was not very serious, but it was curious. Many Liberals and Labour people were greatly concerned at the atrocious proceedings in Ireland under the reciprocal violence of Black and Tans and rebels. But there were also some Conservatives who were horrified by the British Government tolerating the behaviour of their forces, the Black and Tans, and one of these was Lord Henry Cavendish Bentinck, one of those curious Tory aristocrats who are always more liberal than the Liberals and continually vote against their own party. He formed a small society to agitate for "peace with Ireland" and withdrawal of the Black and Tans. He asked me to join it and we used to meet, often in my office of the *International Review*. We were an ineffectual body but one day Henry Bentinck said that there was a young Conservative M.P. called Oswald Mosley, who had been in the 16th Lancers and had married Lord Curzon's daughter, but despite that was very advanced, was horrified by the Black and Tans, and would, if we approved, become treasurer of our society. We approved and at our next meeting Mosley appeared, a handsome young man in top hat and morning coat carrying a gold-headed walking stick. Mosley put new life into us and among other things it was decided that I should write to Wells and ask him to help further our objects. Back almost by return came a bitter, angry letter: the Irish were a set of nasty murderous thugs and they were getting all that they deserved.

H.G.'s second quarrel with me—I never really quarrelled with him—was more serious and more absurd. In 1932 I wrote in the *New Statesman* a review of his book *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind*; as with nearly everything he wrote, much of it was very good, and I gave it high praise. Unfortunately, I wrote among other things that some of the younger generation said that Mr. Wells was a thinker who could not think; in this, I went on, they are wrong, Mr. Wells thinks with his imagination. I immediately received a card from H.G., who was in the south of France, asking me to tell him who was the brilliant young critic who had said that he was "a thinker who cannot think." When I wrote the review, I remembered —or thought that I remembered—that A. L. Rowse had written the words in his book, *Politics and the Younger Generation*, which I had recently read. So when I got H.G.'s card I searched through Rowse's book, and to my astonishment could not find the quotation. I wrote to H.G. telling him this, namely that I had thought that I had read the words in Rowse's book, but that I was mistaken—the words were not in the book. H.G. exploded at once: "It looks as though you wanted the thing said, and hadn't the guts to say it as your own," and I was told that I "ought to do something in the way of public repudiation of that pseudo-quotation." H.G. said that it would not mend matters if I wrote a letter to the *New Statesman* in order to make him look slightly ridiculous, and he sent me a draft of the letter which he required me to send. He added that this was the simple, honest way out for me. "What else, in the name of decency, *can* you do?"

I replied that "I have the greatest admiration for you as a writer (and thinker), but I cannot agree to your writing the letters which I send to the papers." I had therefore written my own letter.

At that time I was editor of the *Political Quarterly* and some weeks before the storm with H.G. blew up, A. L. Rowse had submitted to me an article on the House of Lords. I had accepted it, but returned the MS. to him making suggestions for a few alterations. Now he returned the MS. to me and, when I read it, there (now crossed out) was the fatal sentence about H.G. I told Rowse what had happened and asked him whether he had any objection to my sending the sentence to H.G. and telling him how I had seen and forgotten it in Rowse's unpublished article. Rowse told me that H.G. had written to him from France and asked him to lunch in the following week—and it would be very awkward if he now found that it *was* Rowse who had said that he was a thinker who did not think.

MacDonald

RAMSAY MACDONALD was one of the most curious characters that I have known. When I first knew him, he was more or less in a political wilderness, partly because of his attitude towards the war and partly because he was not altogether trusted in his own party. He was M.P. for Leicester, but it must be remembered that he became chairman of the Parliamentary Labour Party only in 1922, when he had moved already to the right wing of the party; but in 1917 he was counted to be very much to the left.

I used to lunch with him now and again at the 1917 Club and was always amused to observe the acts which he would put on even for my benefit. For he was essentially an actor, the most egocentric and histrionic of men. I remember meeting him one Monday at the Club for lunch when he had come down straight from Lossie-

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mouth and was going to the House in the afternoon for an important debate at which he was to make an important speech. Instead of getting down to business he gave me a long account of how he had spent the Sunday walking on the Scottish hills; it was the set sentimental speech in the mellifluous voice of the orator who wants to draw tears from your eyes before he moves on to the thunderous peroration. It was typical of Ramsay that he should address it to my stony and sceptical ears over the dreary rissoles of the 1917 Club. As we walked away he told me that he had influenza and that his temperature was 102, but that he must go and make his speech. I think it was in fact probably true that he travelled down in the night train from Scotland with a temperature of 102, had eaten his rissoles, had talked without stopping, and would go on and make his speech—all without turning a hair, for he had the kind of iron constitution which is the first and, when I think of Prime Ministers I have known, perhaps the only necessary qualification or asset which a man must possess if he is to become Prime Minister.

I HAVE NEVER known a vainer and a more treacherous man than Ramsay. It was in 1916 that he asked me to come and see him one afternoon in his room in Lincoln's Inn Fields. He wanted me to write a regular article in the *Labour Leader* on the debates in Parliament. I agreed to do it for a year. It was quite interesting, for I had a ticket for the Press Gallery in the House of Commons and only went to listen from time to time to important debates. After I had done it for some months, Ramsay asked me to come and see him again. He buttered me up for a bit, praising my articles, then he came round in a gyrating circle to the real point—couldn't I make it rather more *personal*, dealing with what the Labour M.P.s actually said, and particularly the leaders—and he talked so much about himself that he left me in no doubt that by leaders he meant leader. When Ramsay talked about himself he seemed to ooze vanity.

One of Ramsay's most marked characteristics was tortuousness of mind. One never felt that one quite knew what he was really at, why he was doing or saying what he was doing or saying. This uncertainty was not peculiar to me; people who worked closely with him in the Cabinet or the House of Commons, like Sidney Webb and Arthur Ponsonby, always said the same—if you ever got a glimpse of what was really in his mind, it was so convoluted and equivocal that you felt you had got inside a mental maze.

Finally, there was the curious streak of treachery in Ramsay. Some people in the Labour Party who knew him much better than I did, and therefore suffered much more from him, used to say that his instinct to double-cross and stab his friends in the back was derived from the traditional habit of the Highland Scot to pursue secret feuds. I personally had a remarkable experience of this habit. In the last years of the war I got to know well Norman Angell and the group of young men who were tremendously influenced by his remarkable personality and his remarkable book, *The Great Illusion*. They ran a small monthly magazine, *War and Peace*, which propagated Angell's views; they asked me to join the editorial board, and I edited the paper for some months. I thought that it could be turned into an important international review dealing with foreign affairs and problems of war and peace, with an advisory editorial board consisting of all the leading socialists and trade unionists in Britain and on the Continent. I had discussed this idea with Camille Huysmans and some other continental socialists; they were all enthusiastically in favour of it. I got the support and consent of everyone in writing except Ramsay's, though he had verbally agreed and told me that he thought well of the scheme. As he had not put anything in writing and July was waning with everyone soon going away for their holidays, I wrote him again. Two days later I lunched with him at the 1917 Club; the first thing he said was that he had got my letter and would be delighted to join the board.

Two days later Arnold Rowntree asked me to come and see him. He told me that Ramsay had come up to him in the House and said that he understood that Rowntree was considering starting an international review supported by British and foreign labour leaders and edited by Leonard Woolf. He (Ramsay) would have nothing to do with it, and strongly advised Rowntree not to touch it; it was "an absurd idea." I told Rowntree what Ramsay had said to me two days before. Rowntree said that unless Ramsay gave it his unreserved support, they would not go on with the idea, as otherwise he would do everything to wreck it, and would probably succeed. I went off and rang up Ramsay, but could not get hold of him; so I wrote him a stiff letter asking him what the devil he meant by saying one thing to me and another to Rowntree. I got a wonderful letter back in which the worm coiled and uncoiled and coiled itself again until it was impossible to straighten anything out, but in the last sentence he did tell me to go ahead and God speed you. But I knew now that, whatever God might do, Ramsay was determined not to speed me—and Arnold Rowntree knew it too. He decided that, in the teeth of Ramsay's hostility, they would not go ahead with the original idea. The question remains:

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why did Ramsay stab me in the back? No one could possibly know the convolutions in Ramsay's mind, not even, I think, Ramsay; but incredible though it may seem to be, I believe that one reason was that he himself edited an insignificant paper called the *Socialist Review*. My review could not conceivably have damaged his, but it was safer to stab it in the back before it was born. And yet to give him his due, Ramsay was so convoluted and ambivalent that I should not be at all surprised if he did not with a genuine tear in his eye and a little choke in his superb voice tell me to "go ahead and God speed you" at the very moment that, with practised and unerring skill, he was putting his thin little knife into my back and into the *International Review* in the lobby of the House of Commons. One certainly gets a great deal more pleasure from contemplating the psychology of a man like Ramsay than pain from the way in which he treats one.

Brooke

RUPERT BROOKE was twenty-three when I first met him on that June evening in 1911, the year in which his book of poems was published. In the narrow circle of Cambridge he had already a considerable reputation—for beauty, character, intellect, and poetry. His looks were stunning—it is the only appropriate adjective. When I first saw him, I thought to myself: "That is exactly what Adonis must have looked like in the eyes of Aphrodite." The well-known photograph of him by Schell in 1913, which is the frontispiece of his posthumous book, *1914 and Other Poems*, neither flatters nor libels him. It is almost incredible, but he really did look like that. The photograph, of course, does not show his colouring—the red-gold of his hair and the brilliant complexion. It was the sexual dream face not only for every goddess, but for every sea-girl wreathed with seaweed red and brown and, alas, for all the damp souls of housemaids sprouting despondently at area gates.

Rupert had immense charm when he wanted to be charming, and he was inclined to exploit his charm so that he seemed to be sometimes too much the professional charmer. He had a very pronounced streak of hardness, even cruelty, in his character, and his attitude to all other males within a short radius of any attractive female was ridiculously jealous—the attitude of the farmyard cock among the hens. I never knew him at all well, though I used to see him fairly often when he was in England between 1911 and 1914. Before his quarrel with Lytton Strachey he was friendly both to me and to Virginia. He had a considerable respect for her, I think. He once stayed with her in Firle over a week-end and on Sunday morning they went and sat in Firle Park. He began to write a poem, his method being to put the last word of each line of rhyming quatrains down the sheet of paper and then complete the lines and so the poem. At one moment he said: "Virginia, what is the brightest thing you can think of?" "A leaf with the light on it," was Virginia's instant reply, and it completed the poem.

Leonard Woolf

The Salt Stream

Water running all the time, fascination
Of sharp water that cuts the breath in gasps
Glittering its stone; my own blood
Beats in sympathy. Though warm
My own eyes glitter like that stone,
I bathe in the smart good wishes of the saline
That smarts my cuts.
(But who would be so foolish as
The lone suicide on the early beach
Plunging his shadow up the shore
With razor dashed like a new groyne
And sun on water like a roasting spit
To risk such a gash to the salt air?)

Peter Redgrove

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EAST & WEST

The Struggle for Kafka and Joyce

A Conversation between HANS MAYER *and* FRANÇOIS BONDY

—May I ask whether during your teaching career in Leipzig you ever took part in any of those conferences which seemed to us to be such harbingers of "cultural thaw"? For example, the Prague Conference on Franz Kafka which was so extensively discussed in the Czech press?

MAYER: This conference was held in late May, 1963.... Earlier during May I had been lecturing at various Yugoslav universities. It is interesting to note that out of all the subjects I had proposed and sent to Sarajevo, Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, and Novisad, the Yugoslavs selected only Kafka and Brecht! So in Yugoslavia I spoke only on Kafka; and then I heard from Prague that they would like to have me at their forthcoming conference, which was to be largely under the direction of the German Institute of the Charles University of Prague, in fact of my colleague, Professor Eduard Goldstücker. [Goldstücker had been condemned to life imprisonment at the Slansky trial in 1952; he was freed in 1956, and "rehabilitated" in 1962.]

—Did he invite you personally?

MAYER: No, I heard from Goldstücker himself that I was going to be invited; but no invitation ever came. Which showed clearly enough that all was not well. Then, an East German delegation turned up in Prague, and although I was not invited, my chief assistant, Dr. Helmut Richter, was. Richter had worked with me for his doctorate—a thesis on Kafka—and I arranged for it to be published. Apparently there was no great keenness in East Berlin to see me there.

PROFESSOR HANS MAYER *was for fifteen years a member of the faculty of the University of Leipzig, and recognised throughout East Europe as one of the leading Marxist scholars. He is the author of a dozen studies in literary criticism; his work was discussed by George Steiner in an article in the April* ENCOUNTER. *He is now living and lecturing in West Germany, where this interview was tape-recorded.* FRANÇOIS BONDY *is the editor of* Preuves *in Paris.*

—How was it reported in East Berlin?

MAYER: It wasn't even mentioned. The Czechs wrote it up, so did the Austrians, the Hungarians, and the Poles—but there was not a single reference to it in East Berlin or Leipzig. Now, this was a very important conference. It wasn't just about Kafka the writer; the real subject was—"how is Kafka to be fitted into a socialist society," what is a socialist society to make of him? No one faced up to this question until several Western Marxist critics, *e.g.*, Roger Garaudy in Paris and Ernst Fischer in Vienna, spoke on Kafka and were promptly rebuked from East Berlin by Alfred Kurella. The result was a rather silly sort of line-up of opposing forces. Ernst Fischer made a formidable impression and his lecture ended with the words: "Are you going to give Kafka a permit to stay?" The upshot was that people began to look upon Kafka (and the conference) as "swallows heralding a new spring." Whereupon the irate Herr Kurella leaps to his feet to announce that he for his part could see no swallows heralding spring—only bats coming out at nightfall.

—How is it that an author like Kafka, who belongs after all to our past, is still able to exert such a topical and disturbing influence?

MAYER: Do you know the address that Jean-Paul Sartre delivered in Moscow in 1962? He went very explicitly into the question of Kafka and put it this way: Kafka is a cartload of dynamite standing between East and West which each side tries to wheel into the other's camp so that it will explode there. The West tried to use Kafka as a cold war weapon with a view to softening up eastern ideology. Whereupon the East—to quote Sartre again—took up the challenge and declared they would have nothing to do with such a writer. The cartload of dynamite could stay just where it was. "We reject Kafka and we refuse to print him." And indeed to this very day, not one line of Kafka has been printed in the Soviet Union. In other words, Kafka has become a weapon in the Cold War.[1] Our job now

[1] Two Kafka stories have now been published in the January 1964 number of "Foreign Literature" (Moscow)—*The Metamorphosis* and *In the Penal Colony*. The pressure for this has been building up for years. Victor Nekrassov has related that when he and other Russian writers (Vera Panova, Daniel Granin) met Alberto Moravia in Leningrad in 1958, "he asked us something about Kafka. We looked at one another in silence, and could not reply. At that time we hadn't even heard of Kafka...."

In view of the theme of Kafka's *In the Penal Colony*—the old cruel commandant is dead but is not allowed to lie in the churchyard, the new, milder commandant has difficulties in changing

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is first of all to rescue a great writer from this ridiculous and perverse situation, and secondly to ask ourselves this question: how is it possible that a man who died in 1922 can figure so largely in the present split between East and West—so that one side can say, "Print Kafka and you are opening the door to revisionism!" while the others say, "Print Kafka if you want to show that you are really more liberal...."

—You know better than I do that there is no general agreement on this in the East. Poland, for example, chose to go her own way and quite a lot of Kafka was printed after 1956 and very favourably received; many Polish writers have explicitly acknowledged their indebtedness to this new and important force in their lives. Which is what Sartre really meant. . . . But should we limit our conversation to Kafka alone? It is remarkable how some writers who belong to the past still exercise this revolutionary power on us to-day.

MAYER: Joyce is one—and Faulkner is another.

—During the thaw in East Germany, you once said as much in a widely-quoted essay.

MAYER: I wrote "On the Present Condition of Our Literature" in 1956, and they still haven't forgiven me! What I said was this: Let us stop behaving as though Kafka never lived, as though Joyce never wrote *Ulysses*. This, of course, involves the whole question of the Cold War, the theoretical basis of what is called "ideological co-existence" or its rejection. In Yugoslavia, Kafka is extremely popular; you can buy paperback editions of *The Castle* and *The Trial* in any bookshop in Belgrade or Zagreb—if they're not sold out. He is a very popular and much-published author in Poland. In Hungary, too, more and more of him is being printed, especially in the excellent periodical *Nagy Világ*, devoted to world literature. Last year *Nagy Világ* printed a first Hungarian translation of the famous letter Kafka wrote to his father.

—I remember I was in Hungary in November, 1956, when the rising took place. After the Russian intervention, people used to tell a story about Georg Lukács: how, when he was arrested, he was taken to Rumania and shut up in some sort of weird castle where he and his fellow-prisoners were treated sometimes like felons and sometimes like guests of honour. After a few days of this, Lukács is supposed to have said, "So Kafka was a realist after all!"

MAYER: Yes, but that's something he wouldn't try to justify theoretically. When I was lecturing at Budapest University in 1962—again it was about Kafka, and the place was packed—I went to see Lukács who had just written the book which has appeared in West Germany under the title of *Against Mistaken Realism*. The book contains one major essay entitled "Thomas Mann or Franz Kafka?", and it shows us a Lukács far from convinced that Kafka is a "realist." For a moment he may have *experienced* Kafka as a realist but he stopped short of committing it to print. On the contrary—"Thomas Mann represents tradition; Kafka represents decadence." Lukács has not changed his mind on this score. I think he is mistaken, and I also think that Lukács' attitude has had much to do with the general mistrust of Kafka in the East. But let me be careful not to confuse cause and effect. Lukács rejected Kafka because of an ideological situation; I don't suggest that Kafka was rejected because Lukács rejected him.[2]

—Some of my Czech friends have told me that when the scene was being prepared for the Slánsky show trial, they knew people who found themselves accused and didn't even know what they were supposed to have done—such people felt themselves living in a world whose only literary counterpart was Kafka's Trial. *What he describes there—that was what was actually happening to them. How few so-called realistic writers would be able to give people in such a predicament this feeling! Am I reading too much into this?*

MAYER: No, I don't think this is an artificial construction put on Kafka. On the other hand I don't think that it is only in countries of the Eastern bloc that one finds Kafkaesque reality—what the French now call *"le Kafkaesque."* I was in Vienna in Spring 1963 when the Orson Welles film *The Trial* was first shown. A Vienna newspaper critic argued that the film made a great mistake in attempting to evoke the "Kafkaesque" from such a proliferation of Brobdingnagian halls and robot colonies. Walk into any Viennese office (wrote this paper) and you will find more genuine Kafka than in all these echoing halls put together. Clearly, Kafka is of significance to all of us in our modern situation; but some of us will recognise certain facets more readily than others. Many of those who know what reality is like in the eastern countries will recognise each other in *The Trial*, in episodes of *The Castle*, in this anonymity. And yet it is probably not this but the problem of what is called "decadence" that is essential.

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the organisation significantly—C. L. Sulzberger, in the *New York Times* (2 March) was "led to wonder whether some liberal Communist intellectual is not deliberately twitting both Moscow censorship authorities and the Party hierarchy...."

[2] In Lukács' recently published study of *Aesthetics*, Kafka is compared favourably with Beckett, unfavourably with Chaplin.

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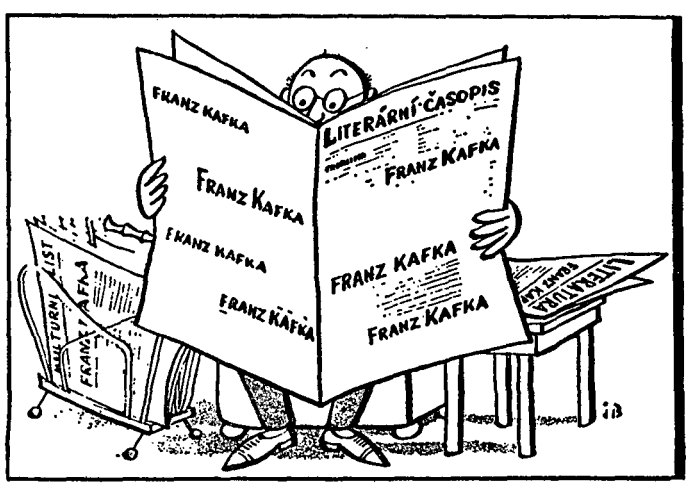
—I still think that if we look at moments and areas of greatest liberalisation in the Eastern bloc—say, Poland in 1957 or present-day Hungary—we find in purely literary spheres an amazing degree of openness. But the moment that certain conceptual matters such as—"what is capitalism?" "what is socialism?" "what is a multi-party state?," etc., raise their heads, then expression is restricted. It is because of this that I suggest one might usefully distinguish between literary and ideological co-existence.

MAYER: The whole question of decadence and ideology and co-existence is also a question of theory, wherever Marxism is "theologically" applied and practised—*i.e.*, wherever it is held that every word that Marx or Engels or Lenin wrote, no matter whether a deliberate statement in print, a rough draft, or a quick scrawl in a diary, are all Holy Writ. When things come to this pass it is natural for a mentality to develop —a mentality which still holds its ground in Moscow, and, of course, East Berlin and Leipzig try to out-Herod Herod in this respect—which sees the revisionist devil, the reprobate infidel, in anybody who dares to question any of these sacred fiats. The whole problem of ideology and co-existence proceeds from a petrified and sterile theory which is *ipso facto* not really a theory; for a theory which assumes the right to call itself "dialectical materialism" and then proceeds to put petrification in the place of dialectic, can hardly claim to be living up to its own terms.

—Looking at the matter purely psychologically, where does this urge to keep out whatever is uncomfortable or disturbing come from? Marx has to be falsified in the process—for Marx was far from dogmatic vis-à-vis *the writers of his time, and there is as little trace of this doctrinaire attitude in him as there is of the Inquisition in the Gospels. At some point this brand of purely dogmatic Marxism must have been injected into the Doctrine as it simply cannot be found in Marx himself. In other words, Marx has not only been canonised; in order to make him appear so and keep him so, he has also been distorted and even censored.*

MAYER: Both. He has been falsified—that is to say, sentences he wrote have been taken from their historical context (which is in itself from the Marxist stand-point a deadly sin); he has also been censored, *i.e.*, his earlier works on philosophy and economics (actually very important documents in the development of Marxism) have been omitted from the canon. Let me give you an example of two interpretations of one text—the official dogmatic and the revisionist interpretation—which will show you what I mean. One of the main texts of the eastern dogmatic school—it is fortunately safe to call them the Stalinists—is Lenin's pamphlet on *Party Organisation and Party Literature*. The most momentous and far-reaching misuse has been made of this little work (and this remains true whether we agree with Lenin's original argument or not). A ruling on the meaning of this pamphlet has actually cost many men their lives and many more their liberty! Lenin wrote the book in 1907 after the abortive revolution of 1905 and its thesis can be stated simply: writers who are members of the Bolshevik Party must toe the Party line in all their writings. That is to say, the Party must have the right of supervision over whatever writers belonging to this small conspiratorial party of 1907 produce. There is, as a matter of fact, no agreement even on the relatively minor point whether the ruling applied to *dramas* and *novels*—not that there were very many of those forthcoming from Lenin's little party—or whether it meant that a writer who was also a Party member could only publish political pamphlets. But what happened under Stalin? This scrap of Holy Writ according to Lenin was inflated into the general dogma that the Party—no longer Lenin's handful of conspirators but the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—and the State have the right to decree that nothing be written or published that is not in line with Party doctrine. This interpretation of this Leninist text sealed the fate of many important writers and artists, censored and



"That's the only name one sees in the papers."

Dikobraz (Prague), 25 July 1963

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hounded to death like Isaak Babel, Boris Pilnjak, Mandelstam, and Meyerhold. These writers had expressed opinions that ran counter to the current Stalinist Party line, and judgment was accordingly pronounced: it is written in Lenin that you are wrong, therefore your books must be censored.

—What is it that makes such people—you yourself must have met and been well acquainted with many of them, especially in East Germany—delight in sniffing about for subversive passages in books, setting themselves up as censors? There seems to be a special type of person who enjoys doing it. I have often wondered how it is that men of education and culture like Josef Révai in Hungary, or—I suppose—Kurella in East Germany take such a delight in depriving the younger generation of the chance of reading what they *must have read themselves in their younger days. From a purely human standpoint I find this very difficult to understand.*

MAYER: We won't get very far if we look at this from a purely psychological standpoint. But we can throw a lot of political light on the matter. Writers who follow the Party line in East Germany always trot out the same old argument, which I, for my own part, do not regard as valid. In Germany, divided as it is, we have a very special situation, and if we are to meet the demands presented by our special road to socialism then we must make certain conditions binding for culture and literature as well. In Prague, in Hungary, in Poland, things may be quite different (though this bit sticks in their gullets because, in 1956, they were all trumpeting how horribly wrong things were going in Poland and Hungary). Thus, special East German measures are alleged to be necessary, and these have led naturally to tension, crises, and finally to the erection of the Wall. So it is that special measures are always begetting special situations, very special situations which in their turn engender a fresh round of restrictions and more very special measures. It is a vicious circle. But the individual case is quite different. As for Alfred Kurella—now, there is a portentous figure for the whole cultural life of Eastern Germany. He comes of a bourgeois family and was a member of the *Jugendbewegung*. In October, 1913, he climbed the Hohen Meissner and a friend of his who knows him very well and even likes him, once said to me: "The trouble with Kurella is that he's never come down—he's still on the top of that mountain." The man has never really outgrown the *bündische* ideals of the German youth movement. This man who rejects Kafka and Joyce and the whole of modern literature and who regards Expressionism as drivel to be banned from German Universities—this same man comes up suddenly with a brilliant brainwave: he is going to create a cultured nation, with everybody in Bitterfeld and Erfurt reading Hesiod and Homer and reciting the *Nibelungenlied*. A curious mésalliance between the Youth Movement of 1913 and Marxism of the 'twenties, plus, in Kurella's case, the experiences of an émigré German in Stalin's Russia. Of course, there are psychological factors as well. It was not enough for Kurella to fail as a painter; he had to fail as a novelist as well. Even *Aufbau*, his publishers, who had perforce to print his novel, *Gronauer Akten*, and other products of his pen, used to split their sides over the stuff. So that's Kurella for you—a human catastrophe who sees himself in the role of State preceptor for the younger generation. There are no doubt psychoanalysts who can explain this sort of thing; but all that really matters is that a man like this, fundamentally lacking in the requisite spiritual, philosophical, and literary essentials, has it in his power to censor and to silence. When, a few years ago, the East German poet Peter Huchel was offered the West Berlin Fontane prize, Kurella threatened him and warned him not to accept. Huchel refused. And Kurella said to him: "Huchel, in the Soviet Union I have seen proud men going to their death...." When such things happen, then what we are faced with is something very much bigger than Herr Kurella's complexes. Here is one of the contemporary masters of the language faced with brute force from this specimen of human failure.

—So that's Kurella! In recent weeks people have been asking what sort of man Wilhelm Girnus is. If we may stay on this personal note for a little longer—I think you worked with him.

MAYER: I'm not at all sure that my personal reminiscences are of any value, but I'm very willing to say something about Wilhelm Girnus. He was a pupil of mine and wrote an excellent thesis on Goethe's conception of art and literature. Ernst Bloch was co-examiner with me and we had no hesitation at all about accepting the very scholarly work that Girnus submitted. His drawback, I suppose, is that really he knows nothing about modern art or literature; he is only interested in the German classics. He is a great Goethe fan. Well, so am I. But it seems to me that using Goethe to stifle modern creative writing is not being exactly true to Goethe; rather the reverse; to me it seems a denial. To Girnus modern literature is a closed book and he did a great deal of harm up to 1953 when he was an "ideological consultant" to the so-called State Arts Commission. Brecht was always at loggerheads with him, and Girnus hated Brecht. When Girnus wrote his articles in *Neues*

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Deutschland attacking Ernst Barlach, Brecht was moved to answer with his fine essay in defence of Barlach which appeared in *Sinn und Form*. Girnus has always rejected and reviled everything that smacked of modernism in literature, mainly, I should say, because of inherent inability to think himself into it, to grasp it. He is a man of considerable culture, no doubt of it, but he is mainly interested in the Party line. And sometimes he's not too particular. Let me mention my own experience of him. First of all, he pursues me to Hamburg urging me to return to my Chair in Leipzig—needless to say, I turned a deaf ear. Failing in Hamburg, he sends a registered letter to my address in Tübingen full of typical Girnus arguments, hoping to bring off what he failed to achieve in Hamburg. Again he draws a blank. Whereupon he breaks out in a spirited parody of my recent essays which appeared in *Sonntag*. That still doesn't satisfy him. So off he goes to my old flat in Leipzig and has fifty cases of my books carted away, presumably in the interests of State security.

—Perhaps he wanted something decent to read.

MAYER: Maybe—possibly for his own library but quite certainly for the Humboldt University Library and for his own Institute. Be that as it may, a pupil who purloins fifty cases of books belonging to his old teacher is a curious fellow.

—You mentioned Brecht. It has always seemed strange to us that it was precisely in East Germany, in cultural matters the most inflexible of the satellites, that this man worked, whose influence on the whole world has been and still is so very lively and infectious. How much persists of his spirit in the country which he himself chose to live in?

MAYER: It seems to me that first we have to take stock of the situation as it was in 1948/49—when Brecht elected to come to East Berlin. The Eastern Republic was not set up until 1949. At the time the spirit of hope was vigorous; one could discern enormous possibilities.

—Were you there yourself?

MAYER: I myself moved there at about the same time, and people have often asked me what on earth possessed me to move in October, 1948, from Frankfurt-am-Main to Leipzig. Let me give you a few facts. At the same time Ernst Bloch was coming from America to Leipzig; also from the States came the distinguished anthropologist Julius Lips (whose premature death was such a great loss to us); in November, 1948, Arnold Zweig turned up from Israel, and Bertolt Brecht came via Switzerland and Prague to East Berlin. Early in 1949 the periodical *Sinn und Form* was founded and at the same time the "Berlin Ensemble" was founded by Brecht, Hans Eisler, Ernst Busch, Erich Engel, and others. A few months before I moved to Leipzig, Walther Felsenstein had re-opened the Comic Opera. All of which goes to show that much was happening here, that things looked very promising. The first DEFA films were remarkably good. It was only later that things began to petrify. This tendency increased until we arrive at the present-day situation in East Germany—and find not one of the creative spirits behind that tremendous intellectual and cultural upsurge still there or still working in the manner envisaged in 1949. Bloch and I are in the West; Peter Huchel has had to abandon *Sinn und Form*; Brecht is dead. But nothing is left of the spirit that drew us all together in those days of common hope and endeavour.[3]

—Of course these years saw a literary renaissance in other countries too, e.g., in Poland. There, too, great hopes were cherished which were soon to be nipped. This frost was more widespread than one sometimes thinks. What is of interest is the fact that "the Thaw," when it came, took specific national forms. Which brings us back to what you call ideological co-existence. Do you think that what we are suffering from is the aftermath of the epoch that died with Stalin and out of which something new can yet emerge—or is it the onset of a new ice-age?

MAYER: I think it is both. Stalinism is not yet a spent force; but on the other hand something different is emerging. I remain convinced that we must distinguish the East German situation very sharply from that of the other states in the Eastern bloc. There has never been a West Prague or a West Warsaw or a West Budapest. In these countries the bourgeois intelligentsia is actively at work, especially in the universities, which they run on admirably rational lines (in striking contradistinction to much that was laid down as education policy in East Berlin by Secretary of State Girnus). The result is that if we go to the German seminars in Budapest, or Prague, or Warsaw, we shall find curricula embracing the *whole* of German literature—while in East Germany, Old and Middle High German Literature, and the whole of the 16th and 17th centuries, have been dropped *in toto*.

[3] In a recent number of *Sinn und Form*, an East Berlin scholar (Werner Mittenzwei) dares to suggest that Kafka was one of Brecht's favourite authors, that he had called him "prophetic" and even "a true Bolshevik writer." One of the poems by the young lyric poet Günter Kunert which put him into trouble with the Party was sub-titled "On the Work of Franz K."

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—Why is that?

MAYER: Because they think it is not ideologically necessary—because it doesn't matter. Instead, the students have to read the latest stories about tractors and the partition of Germany. The classical period still figures in German literature courses but in a very abbreviated form—for instance, one single scene from *Kabale und Liebe* does duty for the whole of Schiller! Thus the fact that Warsaw and Prague have never been divided cities like Berlin, the fact that the teaching staffs at these universities stayed put, means that they enjoy two advantages: first, there is an unbroken intellectual and cultural tradition, and secondly, all the forces are there present whose task it is to oppose any new freeze-up of creative talent, any fresh plague of dogmatic scholasticism.

—One usually speaks of co-existence as though it were a problem arising only between East and West. The fact is, of course, that there is to-day quite a considerable degree of co-existence, cultural relationships, exchanges, and information services between the West (especially Western Germany) and the countries of the Eastern bloc. What about co-existence between East and East?

MAYER: Well, my impression is that cultural relations between East Germany and the other satellites, so far as they exist, are far cooler than they are, for example, between Polish writers and artists and the West. Of course there are also cross-connections. For example, the Leipzig Theatre Company has made a practice of exchanging with their opposite numbers in Brno. Theatre companies in university towns are also under the patronage of the universities, all this, of course, State-organised. The fact is that while there are plenty of cultural agreements among the East European countries, there is precious little sign of any genuine living cultural exchange. I certainly have never gained the impression that anyone in Moscow or Leningrad is particularly keen on finding out what the latest artistic or literary trends are in Warsaw.

—Still, Tibor Déry—after years of prison from which he emerged as uncompromised as the day he went in—attended the Writers' Congress in Leningrad and he was listened to with great respect, and this at a time when no other East European country had as yet invited him. So Moscow is not the North Pole of this particular cold front.

MAYER: Most certainly not. On the contrary—in 1956, a few weeks before the events in Poland and Hungary, when I had the honour of being the first German professor to lecture at the Lomonosov University in Moscow, I was deeply struck by the extraordinary interest displayed by these Soviet students in every aspect of West German and West European art. I was present in the aula of the University when the Moscow students met the Paris *Théâtre National Populaire*. The French actors (Gérard Philippe and Daniel Sorano were still alive then) asked what their audience would like to hear them do. And what did these Russian students want to hear? —Apollinaire, Rimbaud, and Baudelaire! That is to say, three writers who are, as far as Soviet officialdom is concerned, still labelled decadent. When it came to the French turn to listen to Russian poetry, a young student got up and recited Mayakovsky. Plenty of intellectual common ground there! And when one of my colleagues was in Leningrad in 1961 he was asked to lecture. He agreed. "But look here, you won't talk about Bredel and Marchwitza and Apitz, will you? We know all about that sort of thing. Do you think you could do something on a West German writer?" It so happened that he had been doing some work on Heinrich Böll, which he suggested might do for a lecture subject. "Böll?" came the answer. "Splendid! You talk about Böll."

I did not mean that opinion in Moscow is not open to influences from the West; what I meant was that there is not the same readiness in Moscow to welcome innovation from Poland or Hungary. Tibor Déry is, of course, a special case. You see: Déry—it is no accident that he is one of Georg Lukács' favourite authors—is a splendid writer, but he belongs to the realist school of 19th-century novelists, the Balzac-Tolstoy tradition. And that, I think, is how he is looked upon in Moscow and Leningrad. But whether they would accord the same reception in Moscow to Tadeusz Rózewicz or Slavomir Mrozek, that is, to young Polish dramatists strongly influenced by Ionesco and Beckett—that's another question.

—To leave purely literary matters for a moment. Consider the present situation in which Communist ideology, split in the quarrel between Russia and China, turns in upon itself to criticise itself almost to the point of dissolution—is this not a process which may profit literary freedom of expression?

MAYER: I believe that literature, modern, creative, honest literature can only profit from this dissension. This seems to me incontestable—all attempts to prevent this happening are bound to fail in the long run. I am not naïvely optimistic enough to say "The wind bloweth where it listeth" and leave it at that. That just won't do. Events in the Soviet Union have shown us how such an immensely gifted people as the Russian people can land themselves for thirty

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years in total collapse of their entire intellectual life. Throughout all the decades of Stalin's rule, in the whole of the mighty Soviet Union, there appeared not one single book on literature, on philosophy, or on history that could be described as a genuine act of literary creation. All the officially sponsored books to appear in the Stalin period had to be subsequently vetted. After Stalin's death, special commissions were appointed in the Soviet Union to vet all the theses submitted for higher degrees under the Stalin régime; and a large number of doctorates had to be annulled as the work turned out to be nothing but a farrago of catch-phrases and "theological" quotations. Even to-day, consider the harm done to creative talent by Ilichev, aided and abetted by Khrushchev, in their bid to win better ground for their ideological squabble with Peking by sacrificing a few intellectuals to the Chinese. No tactical advantage was gained *vis-à-vis* Peking, and the whole camp was deeply embarrassed by the preposterous and anachronistic discussion on art and literature that ensued—so much so that several parties, *e.g.*, the French and Italian Communists, jibbed at taking part in the farce. I believe that in the long run everyone will have to admit—and here we are back to Kafka and Joyce—that it is as impossible to ignore new manifestations in the literary world as it is to ignore new discoveries in the fields of cybernetics or nuclear physics. It is impossible to lead a healthy literary life in Warsaw, Moscow, or Leipzig, without knowing about Joyce and Kafka, Beckett and Ionesco, Brecht and Dürrenmatt, *et. al.*

—I'd like to come back to an expression you used a moment ago—"theology." As long as some states practise government by idea and ideology, so that a number of canonised texts enjoy a monopoly of public opinion, it may be that authors instead of being censored and silenced can be, more simply, interpreted and built-in to the system for use. Isn't every form of literary development in jeopardy as long as this sort of mental and physical closed-shop exists for a particular doctrine?

MAYER: We are, of course, again experiencing the great sociological phenomenon of an idea becoming a material force. Marx says somewhere in a celebrated phrase that "an idea becomes a material force when the masses take it into their grasp." To what extent has the Marxist idea become a material force for the masses in the Eastern bloc?

—But can an idea remain an idea after officialdom has got hold of it?

MAYER: That's the decisive question. As it becomes a material force, the idea is transformed; often it takes on a reactionary character, as we know from the history of all ideas, especially all religions. There is a very remarkable essay by Anna Seghers (published in Spring, 1963) which is full of suggestive material in this connection—and I wonder indeed whether Anna Seghers herself was really aware of the implications of what she was writing. It is a study of several of Dostoevsky's characters as derivatives from Schiller; and when we examine it we find that it is really only one character that is analysed in both Schiller and Dostoevsky—the Grand Inquisitor, the one in *Don Carlos* and the one in *The Brothers Karamazov*. I think it is significant that Anna Seghers has chosen this theme—just as significant as the fact that here she links up with something her one-time close friend and counsellor Georg Lukács once wrote—*Theory of the Novel*—which Lukács has just had re-published in West Germany. A theory of the novel, I must add, for which Lukács wrote a new foreword in which he says (much like André Gide in *Nourritures Terrestres*), "Nathanael, if you want to be a man, do not follow me." Lukács writes: "Whoever reads this theory of the novel must understand that he is reading a book which I—the author—deprecate. . . ."

—Well, even if he does deprecate it, I'm glad he has given us the chance of coming to grips with it ourselves.

MAYER: I agree. But it shows rather clearly how difficult and complicated this whole question of literary and ideological co-existence has become. It is the psychological problem of individuals, *e.g.*, Lukács, who is castigated by East Berlin as a revisionist, while in Budapest many of his own pupils regard him not as a revisionist but as a dogmatic Marxist; this same Lukács who at one moment does what we know he did in 1956 and at the next (and now we have come full circle and are back at the point of departure) champions Thomas Mann against Franz Kafka (and argues that Kafka should not be allowed into print). These are questions of tradition, of the individual, and at the same time of the whole international situation. There is no simple unified solution for the problems of the Eastern bloc. That in East Germany this development process has taken on the most negative, the most inflexible, and—I should say—the clumsiest form is obvious. But if we look at the overall process, I think we shall see signs of the dawning realisation—and the sooner it comes the better—that modern literature must be common property just as modern science is. We had better stop behaving as though Kafka had never lived and as though Joyce had never written *Ulysses*. . . !

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LETTERS

Mon & Non-Mon

IF IT WAS a coincidence that Mr. Nigel Dennis' paper "On Swift and Satire" appeared in the same issue of ENCOUNTER [March] as Mr. Andrew Boyd's project of New Mon, then it was a remarkable one. Because Gulliver, in his account of his Laputan visit to the grand academy at Lagado (chapter V), tells us this: "We next went to the school of languages, where three professors sat in consultation upon improving that of their own country. The first project was to shorten discourse by cutting polysyllables into one. . . ." Thus, the source of Mr. Andrew Boyd's inspiration is discovered, since he cannot be supposed to claim unfamiliarity with Swift. Still, he seems to have forgotten that Gulliver's account goes on like this: "The other project was a scheme for entirely abolishing all words whatsoever; and this was urged as a great advantage in point of health, as well as brevity."

BERNHARD STAEDLER

Stockholm

MR. ANDREW BOYD'S predilection for monosyllabic linguistics would, if implemented, necessitate some agonising reappraisals, and could severely frustrate many important elements in our national economy. Has Mr. Boyd given his attention to the requirements of business and industrial interests, whose vocabularies, like their accommodation-units, steadily proliferate? How could any business or industrial concern programme a major breakthrough in industrial potential, or even discuss it, without introducing automation? To optimise turnover, management must continually concern itself with the throughput of personnel. And no supermarket currently in operation could stimulate turnover without co-ordinating publicity, public-relations, price-manipulation, and other incentives to Consumers.

Indeed, it is incontrovertible that if a Mon scheme were finalised, the resultant frustration of Big Business would divert innumerable executives to the consulting rooms of psycho-analysts. These latter, incidentally, could never integrate *their* activities with Mon-thinking, since it is inconceivable that anyone could suffer from Mon-syllabled fixations, repressions, neuroses, maladjustments, aggressions, or compensatory transferences. All scientists would, of course, be in a similar situation. What, for instance, could chemists do without tetrafluorethylene and aminoacetonatrile?

Another environment in which Mon could have paralysing consequences is Local Government, where such operations as decentralising the overspill and limiting transport facilities would be brought to a standstill. In the wider field of international politics it is difficult to see how unilateral disarmament, multi-racial integration, and resistance to colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism could continue. Conferences and declarations would have to cease, as would manifestos.

Mon, in fact, while no doubt congenial to taciturn cave-dwellers and folksy rustics of the feudal age, would stultify Twentieth Century Modernisation and its characteristic vocabulary.

DORIS DAVY

Kingston, Lewes, Sussex

The Deviationists

ALTHOUGH I understood only a little in the article in the September ENCOUNTER on the praxeology of deviation control, something tells me that the history fed into the computer (if that is the sort of thing it is) ought to be more or less correct. Anything else must surely be unfair not only to Professor Brzezinski's famous pupils in Moscow and Peking, but to the students of Columbia University. The following are true facts about Jansenism, all in contradiction with the assertions and implications of the article. Sainte-Beuve, the greatest of all the authorities, has provided all the necessary documentation, and it is perfectly readable. I am sorry if Pastor on the Popes has misled the Professor (or perhaps it was Tollemache) but there it is.

(1) Jansenism was a movement directed to inner perfection and not to changing or controlling society still less the State, so that when Professor Brzezinski very understandably wrote: "the spiritual (activity of the Catholic Church) . . . is altogether excluded from consideration" he ought to have excluded the Jansenists straight away.

(2) His informants about what Gallicanism was (and to some extent still is) seem to have been much *more accurate unless the misleading wisecrack* about the "French way to Heaven" is theirs. The mistake is to have supposed that Jansenism was in alliance with it; for

(3) There was *no* connection between Jansenism and French foreign policy, and no Spanish Netherlands diplomacy worth the name for Jansenius (Bishop of Ypres) to be connected with, though he once wrote a fierce anti-French pamphlet called "Mars Gallicus" which got his French friends into serious trouble with Richelieu. It is in any case not enlightening to talk confidently about French *nationalism* in the 17th century. It was the Government and some of the Bishops who were determined to keep the Pope within what they thought were his proper bounds. I do not think any of these Bishops belonged to the Jansenist movement.

(4) As to the French Government being allies of the Jansenists, it was Richelieu who put the leader of the movement (Saint Cyran not Jansenius, who only wrote a very dull book) into the dungeon of Vincennes and Louis XIV, nearly fifty years later, who after exiling Arnauld personally dealt—through the Archbishop of Paris—the mortal blows which had their final effect early in the following century. Strongly illiberal and centralizing govern-

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ments do not like movements of spiritual reform which may upset the ideological unity of the State, as witness the experiences of the first Quakers in England. This does not mean that converts or friends of such movements may not get high posts at Court and do a lot to help their suffering brethren as Pomponne (Arnauld's nephew) did at Versailles and Penn in London.

(5) St. Cyran, admittedly a friend of Jansenius, came from the neighbourhood of the Spanish frontier (Bayonne) and only once visited Louvain, so it is not very helpful to make so much of the movement being "peripheral."

(6) The famous "Five Propositions" quoted by the Professor and described by him as the Jansenists' principles were sincerely regarded by *all* the Jansenist leaders as heretical. Rome, under pressure from Jesuits working closely with the French Government (whose aim was not so much to extirpate a heresy as to destroy a group) constructed them out of Jansenius' book but did not extract them from it. The Jansenists refused obedience to the resulting orders to disavow the "Propositions of Jansenius" as an intrusion of political power on the private conscience. They could not bear to subscribe, under police compulsion (French—not papal) to a statement which contained an untruth, even though it enfolded a formula which they would gladly have said was heretical if they had been allowed to get off so easily.

Even if this was not a real case of conscience, they thought it was and, generally speaking, the issue was the struggle between private conviction and public authority. This does of course arise again and again in history, even if there are no praxeological lessons to be learned from it. It does not, however, in the least resemble anything now going on between the governments in Moscow and Peking.

E. B. Boothby

London

Your correspondent sounds upset; perhaps there is little I can say to calm him. However, may I be allowed to correct some of his factual misapprehensions?

(1) Surely he must know that "movements directed to inner perfection" gradually gravitate towards expressing that "perfection" through standards of social behaviour. For example, has your "Jansenist" correspondent ever heard of Calvinism?

(2–3) The bishops indeed did not belong to the Jansenist "movement" (I did not say they did), but it provided a convenient ideological underpinning for Gallican self-assertion versus central control, which was the point that I was making and which your correspondent missed. I made no connection between French foreign policy and Jansenism.

(4) I described the attitude of the French Government as one of "passive support" (p. 82) and not that of an "ally"—Mr. Boothby's term. After fifty years or so, the French Government indeed did deal a mortal blow to Jansenism (the point I explicitly made on page 83), but I was primarily concerned with what happened *during* these fifty years.

(5) No point was made about the "movement being 'peripheral'," so there is nothing to refute here.

(6) I was not concerned with the "sincerity" of the Jansenists but with the relationship between them and the centre of "orthodoxy." Refusal, for whatever reason, to accept the "orthodox" formula made them, in the eyes of the centre, deviants.

Since I know how tedious it is to plough through an article which one has difficulty in understanding, I was doubly gratified by Ambassador Boothby's interest.

Zbigniew Brzezinski

Columbia University

Theologian

In a curious way C. E. Martini's comment [December] on "God and the Theologians" was, for me, both offensive and agreeable. Offensive because of its abnormal anti-intellectualism. Agreeable, because I have often felt that theology is futile and produces nothing more than a schismatic system of intelligent guesses. Yet I go on reading it for no other reason than the one of being interested in ideas. Like the theologians, I prefer to sit down and think, or talk, rather than get up and act.

Further: *Do* ordinary people take seriously "these thinkers from Germany"? By "ordinary people" is meant, I take it, ordinary believers, in which case it can safely be said they are most untheological in their faith. No matter, if Tillich is unknown to them or only vaguely known as a bit of a heretic he would, I am sure, receive toleration.

H. H. Brindley

Rushall, Staffordshire

Wain & the Novel

John Wain in his article on Shakespeare [Encounter, March] paused to give novels a sharp kick and as he writes them himself I thought he might need cheering up.

> The relationship between the poet and the reader, or listener, is not a mere producer-consumer relationship such as we see in the case of the novelist... the readers of a novel are consumers only; they sit back and let the novelist work on them.

Often true, but not necessarily true. There is no reason why a novel shouldn't demand as much from its public as poetry. Nowadays we do not talk much about the art of fiction, possibly because of the common supposition that it is something to do with Victorian dinner parties and Henry James. There is more to it than that. Prose narrative is a complex art in which (to give a few personal preferences) Fielding, Jane Austen, Dickens, and Faulkner have done some surprising things. What

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makes their work stand up as art has little to do with the so-called realism of the novel but a great deal to do with some of the formal qualities Mr. Wain sees in Ovid. The organisation of a novel depends on the handling of time. There is a useful convention that the action is over before pen has been put to paper. The art, then, is to let the reader into the past in just the right way. This is only part of the job because the real joy of a good novel (and this is where the reader has to contribute) springs from an awareness of the calculated relationship between writer, material, and reader. Novels that read like autobiography, biography, or confessions are thinner than they need be. They are feigned documents, not literature.

Perhaps Mr. Wain was really suggesting that the time had come round for another look at what is involved in the craft of fiction.

P. H. NEWBY

Coke's Lane,
Chalfont St. Giles

"Has Wales a Future?"

A Comment — By LORD RAGLAN

MR. GORONWY REES' article [ENCOUNTER, March], is a strange mixture of realism and fantasy. I hasten to say that the realism predominates, but the fantasy is there. He says himself that he must beware of mistaking the past for the present, the myth for the reality, but this is what in parts of his article he does.

He says that Wales to the English holiday-maker seems foreign, dark, and mysterious, but the people the holiday-maker comes in contact with, the keepers of hotels, boarding houses and shops, are mostly English, or at any rate non-Welsh.

He mentions the incident in the Mabinogi in which a prince pursues a lady on a white horse, and says that it has "the power to arouse the sense of something inexpressibly ancient and mysterious, ever fresh, ever young, as if it brought us closer to the childhood of the world." But in the childhood of the world there were neither princes nor riding-horses, and the world to which it brings us closer is the artificial world of the so-called age of chivalry. It is true that he realises that this is an unreal world, but he follows with another illusion, that the "Welsh way of life" was "the creation of peasants." The fact is, however, that no peasants have ever created anything, and on the next page he says that this way of life was based on the Bible as mediated by John Wesley and his followers. He is unjust to the Welsh, however, when he complains that they cannot create genuine fairy tales any more. Nobody nowadays can create fairy tales because they are based on beliefs which are no longer held. Students of fairy tales, moreover, doubt whether any of them are of Welsh or even of European origin.

I DO NOT OFTEN, however, disagree with what Mr. Rees says. I agree with all he says about the report on the Welsh language by the Council for Wales and Monmouthshire, and should merely like to supplement his remarks by pointing out that the census figures on which the Council relies are misleading. According to the census 656,000 people returned themselves as Welsh-speaking, and the Council and all the Welsh language enthusiasts assume that these are all habitual Welsh speakers. But this is far from being the case, as was brought home to me once when on a summer's afternoon I walked through Carmarthen on a market day. It was full of farmers, all talking Welsh. In the evening I again took a walk through the town, and the streets were full of people, all talking English. I later learnt that in Carmarthen, and in other towns in the Welsh-speaking counties, the townspeople acquire enough Welsh to do business with their rural clients and customers, but normally speak English. There are also many people who spoke Welsh in their youth, but, having married non-Welsh-speakers or moved into English-speaking areas, now normally speak English. And there are a good few who, having acquired a smattering of Welsh for fun, return themselves as Welsh-speakers. So it is not only that three-quarters of the people of Wales speak no Welsh, but that many who profess to do so normally speak English. The self-deception of the Welsh language enthusiasts became obvious recently, when, having put forward Cardiganshire as a county where all were demanding more Welsh broadcasts, they were faced with the protest by thousands in that county against the B.B.C. proposal to cut them off from their favourite English programmes. This point should be made because people in England, led astray by the Welsh-language fanatics, are apt to believe that Welsh is the language of Wales.

Mr. Rees tells his readers, very interestingly, much about Wales as it is to-day, but, in view of his title, has surprisingly little to say about the future. One would expect him, in particular, to have a good deal to say about the future of education. The present position is that, both in the universities and the schools, education is predominantly

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in English. The Welsh language enthusiasts, like everyone else, realise that in these circumstances Welsh is doomed slowly but steadily to die out. It is taught as a subject in most English-speaking areas, but not in such a way that the pupils leave school with any great knowledge of it. The Welsh Department of the Board of Education, which has long been dominated by Welsh language enthusiasts, would like to insist on much more Welsh teaching, but they have to watch their step. What they are now doing is to make as much propaganda as they can and push in an all-Welsh school here and a Welsh department there, meanwhile persuading the Minister, who seems to consult nobody else, that what they are doing has the enthusiastic support of the Welsh people. They hope, one supposes, by these means to acquire a sufficient body of vociferous supporters to overawe protesters against further measures of compulsion, as part of a campaign for a wholly Welsh-speaking Wales.

This, we must hope, is nothing more than a bad dream, but what would happen if it came true? The answer is that Wales would be cut off from civilisation. No Welsh scientist, scholar, doctor, architect, or engineer could hope to be better than tenth-rate, for it would be impossible to print in Welsh even a tenth of the books and papers necessary to enable the student to keep up to date in these or in any subject other than Welsh literature. Anyone who attempts to study such subjects in Welsh puts himself outside the world civilisation in which English has come to play the leading part, and those, including the Welsh Board of Education, who encourage such attempts at study are doing their best to lower the intellectual standards of the Welsh people. In the future, if these misguided people have their way, able Welshmen will no longer be able to write for the world, but only for a tiny corner of it, containing fewer and fewer people capable of understanding any form of scientific writing. The Welsh people would be condemned to stew in their own juice, and such juice soon ceases to be nourishing. "Ourselves alone" soon comes to mean ourselves reduced to ignorance and poverty.

THERE IS ANOTHER bad dream which might possibly come true, and that is of a Wales which remained largely English-speaking but became independent of England. This is, one hopes, even less likely to come true than the other, for this demand for independence makes little appeal except to the language fanatics. Sensible people realise that Wales' economic prosperity depends on maintaining the closest links with England, and that economic links involve political links. As for cultural links, there is no institution in Wales, except the Plaid Cymry and the Urdd, which has not its headquarters in London, and no sane person could suppose that institutions comparable to the Law Society or the British Medical Association could come into existence in an independent Wales.

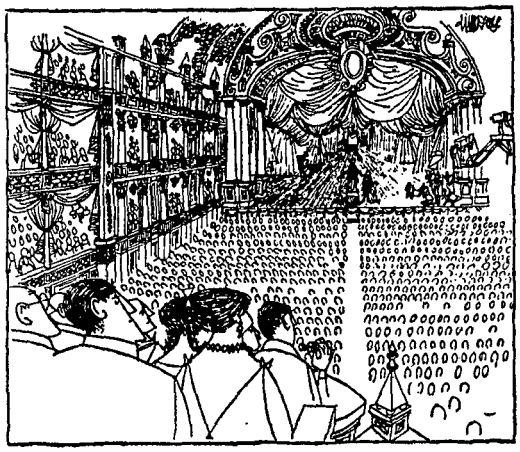
Mr. Rees has drawn an admirable sketch of Wales as it is. I should much like to read his sketch of Wales as he hopes it will be, feeling confident that it will in no way resemble either of my bad dreams.

Grass Grouse

THE "Germany" number of ENCOUNTER was interesting enough, but with Günter Grass on the cover, Grass' poems spread over the middle, Grass impressing Goronwy Rees as Germany's most interesting contemporary writer, etc., etc., wasn't it a bit much? His novels, from the *Blechtrommel* to the most recent *Hundejahre* are also interesting enough, but German literature is not yet being written "from Goethe to Grass"! True, in Germany itself the drums for Grass beat rather heavily, and I enclose a cartoon from *Die Welt* (Hamburg) which might suggest to your readers how far this new cult of literary personality has gone.

FRIEDRICH MARLIN

Munich



"... and this evening, ladies and gentlemen, Günter Grass will give his views on tomorrow's weather...."

Marx & Alienation

I SHOULD LIKE to take issue with Professor J. M. Cameron on one statement in his interesting and provocative review of some recent works on Marxism [ENCOUNTER, October)].

He says, "for the early Marx, private property is a *consequence* of human alienation, not a cause." I find it hard to accept this; what is against it is the whole emphasis and the continuous argument of the Paris Manuscripts of 1844. Marx begins by analysing the structure and working of the system, of society based on private property, on the wage system, on the law of the market as analysed by capitalist economists (which he accepts of course). He then shows that within this entirely impersonal and mechanistic system men are mere pawns driven this way and that by forces they neither understand nor can control. All economic and commercial relations, he says, have been transformed from personal relations into impersonal operations of the market. The only human bond is the exchange value which equates commodities that fetch the same price.

Marx and Engels were greatly influenced at this time by Thomas Carlyle's *Past and Present* which Engels reviewed at some length for the *Deutsch*

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Cardiff

SCIENTISTS *are incoherent in thought, and poor lecturers. In discussion they do better, although they tend to use too much jargon, eking out their vocabulary with grunts and gestures. Their writing is often obscure and illogical.*

These are some of the first impressions gained in a survey on scientific communication being carried out at the Welsh College of Advanced Technology. An example may be found in a recent paper in Nature, *the scientific journal. A sentence reads:*

> *It is probable that the lack of literature relating to inter-tidal mud ecology is due in part to the restrictions placed on movement by the softness of the substratum.*

This means: nothing much has been written about what lives in seashore mud because you cannot stand on it long enough to find out.

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

London

SCOTLAND YARD *is searching for more space in which to store its embarrassingly large stock of obscene books and pictures, and H.M. Customs is forbidden to burn any more obscene books because they were breaking the rules of a smokeless zone by making black smoke. With this in mind, the London Committee Against Obscenity should be of help if its new public campaign is successful.*

Last year 511,457 items of obscene material were seized, and the Customs had to have its store driven away under guard to be shredded. This awkward situation would end if the London Committee achieved its aim of stopping the dumping of surplus American obscene publications in this country.

The Americans have their storage problems, too, it seems. According to the Committee, they find it easier and more economic to ship the material to Britain as ballast for ships than to pulp it—and it travels at low freight rates.

THE GUARDIAN

London

THE EDITING *of the paper* [The Economist] *was a little mechanical. One of the first things the editor said to me after I joined gave me the right line. "Remember," he said, "that if I reprinted this week the corresponding number of last year, nobody would notice it." That was his pawky humour; but a fair parody of the facts. Every Monday, first thing, we turned out last year's volume to see what advice we had given to the nation twelve months ago; and we were inclined,* mutatis mutandis, *to repeat it. Apart from the saving of labour it ensured a consistent policy, but it had its pitfalls. Once in a note on a firm's results in 1907 I followed the line of 1906, and the firm complained I was wrong. "Last year," it said, "you made the same mistake and you apologised." That was true; and so, having repeated last year's mistake in one number, we repeated last year's apology in the next.*

THE ECONOMIST

London

NEWS THAT *Philadelphia Mummers did not appear in blackface this year fell with little impact on London, where "The Black and White Minstrel Show" continues as a popular stage and television attraction. An official of the Trinidad & Tobago High Commissioner's office was asked what he thought about blackface.*

"We regard it as a stage gimmick which goes back, true enough, to slavery—but we don't mind," he said. He recalled putting on a minstrel show in Trinidad in which some Negro performers blackened their faces and others whitened theirs.

On that same theme, some of London's major department stores and garment district organisations announced that they would give up using the term "nigger brown" as a distinguishing colour for apparel.

NEW YORK TIMES

Berlin

A VISIT *from an English company playing Shakespeare is always a provocative experience. We have become so used to thinking of the Swan of Avon as a kind of German house pet. And then we are suddenly amazed or outraged —as with the Scofield-Brook "King Lear" in the Schiller-Theater—that Shakespeare is not quite that at all.*

DER ABEND

Paris

INCIDENTAL INTELLIGENCE (*inflation of the new franc division*): *The latest French edition of "The Moon and Sixpence" (Le Livre de Poche, Hachette) is entitled "La Lune et Soixante-quinze Centimes."*

THE NEW YORKER

London

ACCORDING *to the producer of "The Victors," Carl Foreman, the film has had trouble with censors everywhere: "The French Government demanded that the scene be cut in which French troops shot down Germans who had surrendered with a white flag. The Italians would not stand for a scene in which two Neapolitan children take loot from two corpses. Egypt doesn't want to see the prisoners' break-out from a Nazi concentration-camp, for that strikes them as pro-Zionist. The morality-minded U.S. censor objected to a nude shot of the actress Elke Sommer. As for the Russians, I didn't even trouble to show it to them—because in one of the scenes there is a rather drunken Red Army officer. . . ."*

DER SPIEGEL

Birmingham

EMPLOYEES *of Enfield Rolled Metals, of Ladywood, Birmingham, who have been on strike since Monday because they object to language used by their general foreman, queued up to-day to give union officials examples of the "Army language" of which they complain. A dossier compiled by the unions will be submitted to the management when talks begin.*

Union officials tried to persuade the 270 strikers to return to work so that negotiations could take place, but the men insisted they would not return while the foreman remained on the premises.

THE TIMES

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Französische Jahrbücher in 1843. Carlyle had declaimed against the economic system which reduced the relationship between men to nothing more than that of the "cash nexus." This is the theme that runs through the whole of Marx's early works, culminating in the brilliant essay on Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*—"The Power of Money in Bourgeois Society." It is money, he argues, which destroys individuality, it is "the overturning power both against the individual and against the bonds of society."

It is after the basic exposition of the economic system and its laws, and the effect the system has on the position of the labourer, that Marx comes to the question of *Alienated Labour*. And now he says: "On the basis of political economy itself, in its own words, we have shown that the worker sinks to the level of a commodity and becomes indeed the most wretched of commodities." In the later essay in the same volume on Hegel's Dialectic he reverses the Hegelian notion that alienation arises from selfconsciousness and declares that it arises from "the *real* alienation of the human being", which he has just described in the economic sections. Marx goes on to show that man escapes from this alienation, from the depersonalising influences of capitalism,

> "only in a higher form of society in which society is not an abstraction over against the individual, but his fulfilment. Only a society in which the means of production are communally owned provides the basis for genuinely co-operative human relations. Only in such a community will man find in his relations with others the realisation of his true self."

The Marxist revolutionary imperative, therefore, takes shape as a call to end human alienation by thus reconstructing society. Later, Marx attempted to show that economic development itself required a structure more appropriate to the immense productive forces which capitalism had brought into existence; and that organised labour would find it necessary in its own interests to bring about this economic change. But all such structural changes have as their goal that man should realise his humanity. This is "the categorical imperative to overthrow all relations in which man is a debased, enslaved, helpless, contemptible creature."

This discussion is concerned solely with Professor Cameron's contention that for Marx private property was not the cause of alienation. As to the further questions concerning the extent to which these principles continued to be central both for Marx and his successors, they are an entirely different matter, important though they be. For the Marx of the Paris Manuscripts it seems to be undeniable that Marx regarded the mechanical operations of the market within the capitalist economic system to be the cause of man's alienated and de-personalised condition and not the reverse.

JOHN LEWIS

Morley College, London

THERE is certainly much to be said for Mr. Lewis' interpretation, but I am convinced that on balance Professor Tucker's interpretation is the more plausible. The decisive passage from the 1844 Manuscripts is the following:

> "We have, of course, derived the concept of *alienated labour* (*alienated life*) from political economy, from an analysis of the *movement of private property*. But the analysis of this concept shows that although private property appears to be the basis and cause of alienated labour, it is rather a consequence of the latter, just as the gods are *fundamentally* not the cause but the product of the confusions of human reason. At a later stage, however, there is a reciprocal influence."

This seems to allow Marx to give private property a secondary but not a primary role in bringing about alienation. I think this is also the general drift of his argument in *On the Jewish Question* where alienation in work is again treated as strictly parallel to religious alienation (in Feuerbach's sense).

J. M. CAMERON

University of Leeds

Burning Vatsyayana

FRANCIS WATSON writes, in his article, "Must We Burn Vatsyayana?" [ENCOUNTER, March]:

> "I have no knowledge of what Lord Campbell's Act was able to flush out of Holywell Street.... But C. R. Ashbee, who applied himself to such matters, admitted to his index almost nothing of Indian inspiration except the productions of Captain Edward Sellon."

The great English bibliographer of erotica was not the architect Charles Robert Ashbee (1863–1942), but his father Henry Spencer Ashbee (1834–1900). The latter's *Index librorum prohibitorum* (1877) has a notice, twelve pages long, of a work entitled *History of the Sect of Mahárájas, or Vallabhárháryas, in Western India* (1865), and a further eighteen pages on the Arbuthnot-Burton edition (1873–74) of the *Káma Shástra*; his *Catena librorum tacendorum* (1885) devotes nineteen pages to the 1883 edition of the *Káma Sutra* of Vātsyāyana.

PETER FRYER

London

German History

IN your April issue you lament the fact that Professor Golo Mann's *History of Germany in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* is untranslated. But it soon will be. We hope to publish it next year. PETER CALVOCORESSI

Chatto & Windus,
London.

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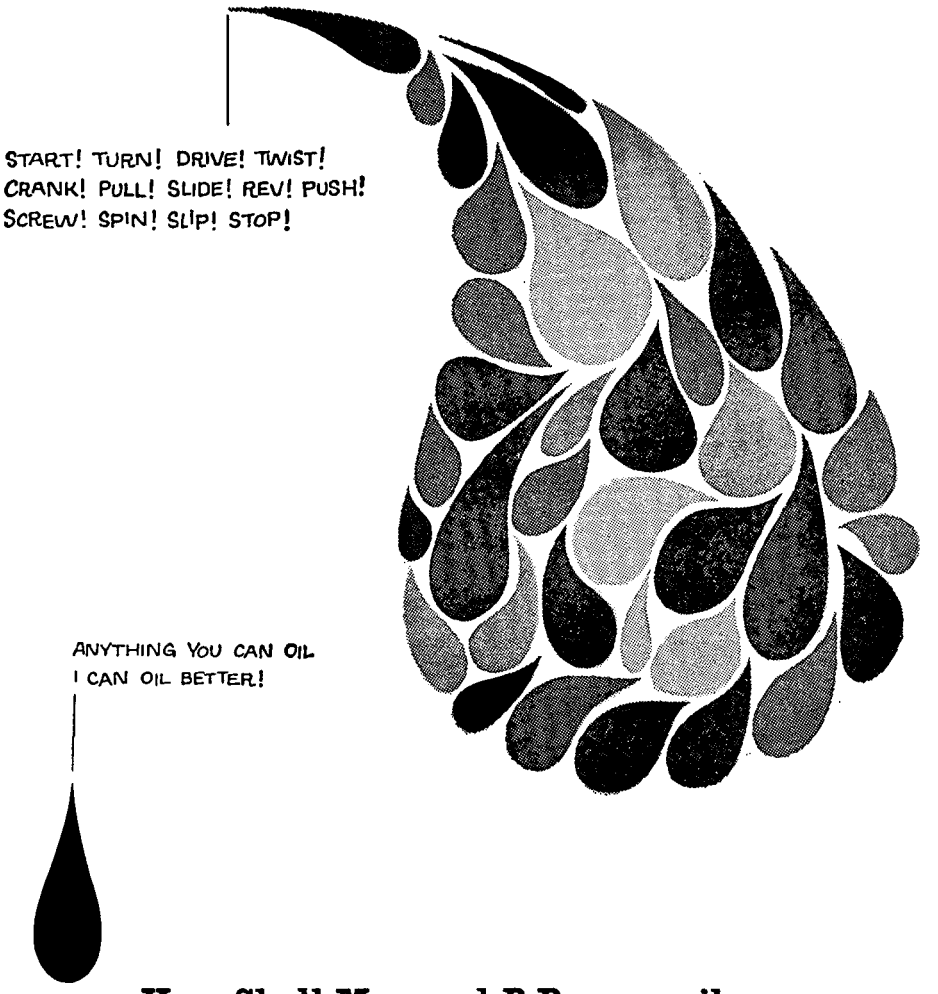

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